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The Religious Development  
of the Child



# The Religious Development of the Child

*An Evangelical Study from  
the Scientific View-point*

By

RUFUS WASHINGTON WEAVER, M.A., Th. D., D.D.

*Author of "The History of the Doctrine of In-  
spiration in the Eighth Century, B. C."*

With an Introduction by

JOHN RICHARD SAMPEY, D.D., LL.D.



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To  
*ROBERT IRVINE ANTHONY MASON*



*"He prayed to God ; the answer came ;  
In thanking God, he called thy name."*



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## Introduction

**F**OR the past ten years we have been in need of a book such as this. I congratulate Christian parents and teachers that it has at last arrived.

What Christian worker has not come face to face with the question whether children need to be converted? If one proceeds on the theory that every child must be converted before admission into the church, he will sooner or later be told that he is quite mistaken in his psychology and theology: children are born in the Kingdom, and only need to be trained to observe the laws of the Kingdom. Books have been written to prove that a child properly reared in a Christian home needs no conversion. We are told that a child only needs to be kept in the Kingdom.

The question at issue is not merely academic but intensely practical. A wrong answer may lead to disastrous consequences. Christian parents and teachers wish to know the truth, that they may be able to guide the little ones aright.

The time will come in the life history of every child when the sense of moral failure on his part will be felt. What then is he to do? The wise teacher will urge him to turn the control of his life over to the Saviour of sinners. When he admits

Jesus as the Lord of his life, to bring harmony out of moral discord, he is converted ; and such an experience is possible to the normal child brought up in the most favourable environment. There may be little excitement connected with the conversion of a child that has been properly trained, but such a transfer of control to Jesus Christ is the transition out of the Kingdom of nature into the Kingdom of grace.

The author of the book is admirably equipped for the task that he has undertaken. God gave him a vigorous mind and a thirst for knowledge, and he has studied in some of the best institutions in America. A voracious reader, a logical thinker, a sympathetic observer of his fellows, he has spared no pains to learn the truth, and he has the courage to declare it without fear or favour. He has long been a student of psychology. He has pursued personal investigations under the direction of one of the greatest masters of the science. Moreover he has read and digested the best books on child psychology. As pastor for fifteen years in country, town and city fields, he has shown himself a tireless worker. He has led children to a personal knowledge of Jesus as their Saviour. He is no mere theorist, though well acquainted with the views of our leading modern psychologists. He keeps his feet on the ground in the midst of the most abstruse discussion. He is a safe guide.

It will not be necessary to urge the educated and thoughtful reader to go on to the end of the book,

for the lucidity and freshness of the treatment and the timeliness of the subject will carry him forward with ever increasing interest; but a word of exhortation to the person of average education may be in order. To such a reader I would suggest that the gold in the mine is worth the digging necessary to make it his own.

JOHN R. SAMPEY.

*Louisville, Ky.*



## Preface

THE gracious reception tendered the delivery of the lectures upon "The Religious Development of the Child," five in number, given upon the Sunday-school Board foundation, and delivered before the Faculty and the students of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, together with the evident interest shown later when those lectures, dealing with the psychological aspects of the general theme, were delivered before the Theological Department of Vanderbilt University, the Presbyterian Bible Assembly at Cumberland University and the Baptist Young People's Assembly at Dawson Springs, Ky., so encouraged the writer that he has enlarged, revised and rearranged the material and now offers it in the form here given.

The discussion relating to the conversion of children is given a prominence, which, in view of the present emphasis upon "salvation through education," is fully justified. The use of the scientific material which leads the writer to defend conversion as necessary to the individual's fullest self-realization, illustrates the method which is being employed in a forthcoming work, "The Psychological Bases of Christian Faith," the pur-

pose of which is to establish our evangelical doctrines upon an empirical study of the Christian experience made from the view-point of the genetic psychologist.

My special thanks are due my honoured instructor, Prof. John R. Sampey, D. D., LL. D., for his introduction which I feel to be all too flattering; my valued friend and parishioner, I. J. Van Ness, D. D., Editorial Secretary of the Southern Baptist Sunday-school Board, who has aided in the revision of the manuscript, and J. M. Frost, D. D., LL. D., Corresponding Secretary of the Sunday-school Board.

R. W. W.

*Nashville, Tenn.*

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## The Survey



I

THE MODERN WORLD AND THE RELIGION  
FOR THE CHILD

THE spirit of unrest is world-wide. Institutions which have stood for centuries are breaking down, and in every country the democratic movement is advancing. Christianity is being put upon the defensive. Charles Horton Cooley says: "In religion, our day is one of confusion in institutions and falling back upon human nature. The most notable books of the day in this field are, first of all, studies in religious psychology. Perceiving that the question has come to be one of the very being and function of religion, they ignore the discussion of particular doctrines, politics or sacraments, and seek a foundation in the nature of the human mind."<sup>1</sup>

The intellectual environment of the modern man differs widely from that of his fathers. The immensity of space, the long stretches of time, the pettiness of this earth contrasted with the total reach of the stellar universe, the study of the autobiography of our planet, read by turning the leaves of the geological strata, have so modified our modern conceptions that the man of to-day in very truth

<sup>1</sup> Cooley: "Social Organization," p. 372.

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looks out upon a new heaven and a new earth. The mind of the modern man has mastered the forces of nature and made them the ministers to human need and comfort. Communication has transformed the world into a whispering gallery, and the nations of earth now form a neighbourhood. The sense of human brotherliness is more potent, the belief in the uniformity of nature's laws is more prevalent, the attitude of the suspended judgment regarding things which cannot be indubitably proved is more wide-spread than ever before in human history. The fields of modern knowledge have brought forth bountifully, and the modern spirit is resolved to tear down the barns the fathers built and build greater.

"The two great forming agencies in the world's history," says Marshall in his "Principles of Economics," "have been the religious and the economic." Commercial prosperity lies at the basis of civilization, while religion furnishes on the one hand those values which determine what the civilization shall seek to preserve, and on the other those ideals which the civilization ever strives to actualize. The character of the civilization is measured by the relative importance given to religious progress as contrasted with material progress.

When Señor Marconi announced that he had discovered a method of communication without connecting wires, there were three tests applied:

1. Evidence that wireless telegraphy was possible ;
2. Evidence that the waves of the upper atmosphere

were charged with sufficient power to carry the message over greatly extended areas ; 3. Evidence that this method of communication was of practical value. His invention successfully met these three tests. To every invention, every institution, every organization seeking a permanent plan in modern life, civilization applies the three tests of proof, power and practicability.

### THE TESTING OF CHRISTIANITY IN AMERICA

Religion in times past has not always been compelled to undergo these tests, but in our civilization there is no escape. We live in the American epoch and under a Constitution which declares that there shall be no organic connection between the social forces that make for the government and the social forces that make for the different systems of religion. In the laboratory of American thought, these tests are being made. Christianity is asked to prove its claims, and it is required that these proofs shall contain nothing but what is intelligible, reasonable and credible. Christianity is called upon to manifest a power making for righteousness in the individual, producing a higher moral character than can otherwise be attained. Christianity is required to furnish evidence of being an essential factor in human progress, making for wealth, nobler character, revealing its practical value in human lives by stimulating them to the development of all their latent powers and inspiring them to exercise these powers for the good of all. Civilization makes

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these demands, not in the interest of any religion, but in the interest of human progress.

### UNFAVOURABLE FACTORS

Christianity is forced to undergo these tests under conditions far less favourable than in the past. The interests of the State and the Church are no longer identical. The authority of the Bible has been brought into question. The growing tendency on the part of those who study religion wholly from the scientific view-point is to explain the phenomena of the religious experience as the product of the social consciousness, while the attitude of culture, whatever the field, cannot be described as favourable to our evangelical faith. The spread of the democratic spirit ; the untrammelled assertion of human opinions, and the breaking down of accepted standards of authority, increase the difficulties in proving the truthfulness, the power and the practical value of the Gospel.

*The interests of the State and the Church are no longer identical.* The separation of the two brought about, along with other changes beyond doubt desirable, a change in the relation of the School and the Church which in the minds of many has wrought untold injury both to the School and the Church.

Educational institutions supported by the State are forbidden to introduce religious instruction which tends to favour any distinct interpretation of Christianity, and the result is the practical elimina-

tion of all religious teaching. In some States, even the reading of the Bible is enjoined by the courts. Yet the public schools of all Protestant lands had their origin in the desire to fit the coming generation for the acceptance of the evangelical faith. Bréal says of the Reformation : " It contracted the obligation of placing every one in a condition to save himself by reading and studying the Bible."<sup>1</sup> The recognition of this obligation led to the establishing of public schools in Germany, Scotland, England and America. The educational spirit of Reformation appears in the Ordinance of 1787, creating the Northwest Territory : " Religion, morality and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." Gradually, however, the religious motive was supplanted and laws were enacted in the different States against the giving of instruction which tended " to favour the tenets of any particular sect of Christians." The State has taken upon itself the education of the American youth, and the limitations which our Constitution imposes upon the State require that religion shall not be a part of public education.

The great educational institutions of America have revolted against the control of organized Christianity. In 1850 there were in this country one hundred and twenty colleges and universities, of which seventy-seven were at the time of their

<sup>1</sup> " The Religious Education Association," 1903, p. 125.

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establishment under denominational control. Nineteen of these institutions changed their charters and are now described as non-sectarian. The remaining schools, fifty-eight in number, have to-day a total endowment of \$11,000,000, while the nineteen schools which began under denominational control, but later severed all connection with organized Christianity, have over \$53,000,000. The colleges and universities of the United States have a total endowment of over \$260,000,000—\$30,000,000 belonging to denominational schools, and \$230,000,000 to non-denominational schools.

The endowment funds of the non-denominational schools have been secured almost entirely through the gifts of the rich. In establishing the fact that the wealth of this country does not desire an avowedly and a distinctly Christian education, no stronger proof can be given than that the philanthropists who have been giving their millions to American colleges and universities know that in modern life the only religion that can display social efficiency, influencing all the individuals of the community, is organized religion, which is necessarily Christianity of the denominational type. The modern institutions of learning demand, in the interest of intellectual freedom, the severance of all denominational control, and this demand is based upon the right of investigation untrammelled by theological prejudices and dogmatic presuppositions. Severing this control, the institution enjoins organized Christianity from participa-

tion in the educational process except through individuals. The followers of Christ, students, professors, visiting ministers may use their personal influence to win other individuals to the acceptance of Jesus as Lord, but the institution definitely declines to recognize the Lordship of Jesus in the field of human knowledge, and refuses to present in a sympathetic way any established interpretation of Christianity. Schools born of prayer, reared by the toil and sacrifice of our sainted dead have fallen under the spell of this malign secularization ; and while they may furnish the student with a greater array of facts, they are able to tell him much less of their implications ; while they may crowd his mind with scientific data, they are not able to teach him the distinctly Christian meanings and values which underlie modern science. The present-day education, to use the words of Rudolph Eucken, lies in the direction of "a culture devoid of any kind of religion."

*The authority of the Bible has been brought into question.* The past one hundred years have witnessed the most vigorous assault ever made by scholarship upon the integrity of the Scriptures. The attack has not been made in bitterness, and comparatively few of those who assail the inerrancy of the Bible deny the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The theological interest in the Bible has given way to the historical interest, and the new motive has brought into being a radically different attitude towards the Bible from that formerly held. The

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new method of interpretation, popularly called "historical Bible study," seeks to create the historical background of each book of the Bible, and to interpret the contents of the Book in the light of the current thought, the existing problems and the religious development then attained. This method of interpretation makes much of the principle of evolution, and seeks to discover the appearance of new religious ideas in the successive books of the Bible. The Book ceases to be a treasure-house of minted gold: it is a mine rich in ore from which the gold is to be extracted. Three elements enter into the new attitude towards the Bible: 1. The Bible is no longer the Word of God, but contains the Word of God; 2. Scholarship is demanded for the interpretation of the Bible, and the absence of scholarship on the part of the common people unfits them to be reliable interpreters; 3. The purpose in Bible-study is dominated by the scientific spirit, which leads the student intellectually to apprehend the truth, but fails, just so far as the scientific spirit is in the ascendancy, to awaken the desire to appropriate and to apply the truth to one's own life. Each element contributes its part in undermining the authority of the Bible as once held by all evangelical Christians.

*The spirit and the methods of modern science do not increase the respect for philosophy and religion. Historical interpretation is simply the application of the inductive method in logic to the study of the Scriptures; it is bringing over into the field of*

Biblical interpretation the method of investigation which has led to such wonderful advancement of knowledge in the field of science. Because the theologian and the exegete were slow to adopt his method, the scientist looked upon them both as narrow-minded partisans and religious bigots, out of sympathy with the spirit of the age. His contempt for these was equalled only by his contempt for the philosopher, whose speculations he despised.

In the Middle Ages, the philosopher held the highest place, combining in his work the field of theology, the field of science, as well as that of his own. The philosopher voluntarily withdrew from the field of Christian theology, and later the modern scientist took possession of and drove him from the field of science. His own particular territory was invaded and his most precious possessions scientific and theological vandals destroyed. While the philosopher claims to be supreme in the domain of mind and has adorned himself with the robes of the interpreter of the world-process, asserting that he speaks with papal authority, his words fall upon dull and unbelieving ears. There have been taken from him the very things by which he hoped to explain the universe. His innate ideas have disappeared under the microscopic investigation of the psychological laboratory. His *tabula rasa* no longer exists. The whole noumenal world, affirmed in his argument for the reality of freedom, of immortality, of God, is, for the modern scientific explorer, a lost Atlantis.

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One possession the philosopher cherished confidently—his own soul; and this even is denied him. The psychologist claims to examine scientifically every psychic phenomenon, and the radical genetic psychologist affirms that he has no need for any such hypothesis as the soul. Some modern psychologists admit a relating activity, but others say they have searched their minds through and through, and find nothing of the kind. As one of them glibly says: "Souls are out of fashion." The philosopher stands stripped of everything save a series of states of consciousness, and these the psychologist claims belong wholly to him, since they are undoubtedly psychic facts.

Religion has suffered along with philosophy, though in a different way. The reality of the religious experience cannot be denied. Forty years ago Lord Morley outlined the plan by which unbelief would discredit Christianity more than by direct attack. The modern free-thinker explains the Christian experience by "referring its growth to the better and not to the worse part of human nature."<sup>1</sup> Religion is defined by the student of religious phenomena as the conserving by the clan, the tribe or the nation of whatever they conceive to be of worth. Thus the science of religion groups under one definition all interpretations of religious life, from the rites in the buffalo dairies of the Todas to the simple service of the Quaker meeting-house. Some give to religion a distinct and unique

<sup>1</sup> Morley : "Compromise," p. 150.

position, while others grant it no higher place than one of the social sciences.

*The attitude of modern culture cannot be described as favourable to our evangelical faith.* Among the great thinkers of the world, Rudolph Eucken, professor of Philosophy in the University of Jena, takes front rank. After carefully surveying existing conditions, he impressively declares that "Modern civilization has reached a crisis from which only a radical deepening of life and an inner renovation of man can rescue it."<sup>1</sup> He says further, "Protestantism of modern days embraces two religions, the difficulty of keeping which tolerably united increases in proportion as the historical sense of the twentieth century brings the peculiarity and the antagonism of both forms before our eye. The fundamental tendencies of the two run counter to each other. Their peaceable and friendly coöperation, such as existed in earlier times, becomes impossible. A clear understanding is increasingly necessary; continually harsher is the rejection of Christianity by those who follow the specifically modern tendency."<sup>2</sup> Again he says: "Modern thought has entered into conflict with Christianity, not only in certain directions, but in the whole of its tendencies and efforts."<sup>3</sup>

Principal P. T. Forsyth of Hackney College, England, viewing the modern world from the stand-

<sup>1</sup> Eucken : "The Problem of Human Life," p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 297.

<sup>3</sup> Eucken : "The Truth of Religion," p. 24.

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point of a theologian, reaches similar conclusions. He says: "Our present Protestantism is historically composed from the union of two streams which take their rise in two different sources. They are the Reformation and the Illumination. They present not so much two theologies as two methods, if not two religions. The direct legacy of the Reformation laid fundamental stress upon the sense of guilt and the action of grace. The direct legacy of the Illumination laid stress on native goodness, the sense of rational sympathy and the sufficiency of human love spiritualized. For the one, man was the lost thing in the universe, and the greatness of his ruin was the index of the dignity of his nature. For the other, man was the saving thing in the universe, and the greatness of his success in subduing the world to his thought and will was the badge of his heroic divinity, soiled, perhaps, but indelible. The one lived by redemption and regeneration: the other by evolution and education. For the one, forgiveness was essential, and it was identical with the new eternal life; it was a redemption. For the other, forgiveness was incidental and simply removed obstacles—a restoration. The one cultivated theology and sanctity; the other science and sentiment, criticism and romance. The one saw the New Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God; the other saw it rise like an exhalation from earth. The heaven of one was the blue sky; for the other it was the growing grass. For the one, Christ is absolute; for the

other, He is but relative to the history from which He arose. For the one, Christ is the object of our faith; for the other, we believe like Christ. In the one He is our God; in the other, He is our brother."<sup>1</sup>

Strong though Protestantism appears to be in wealth, culture and numbers, there is a division within its ranks far more serious than the separation into the various denominations. This division follows no recognized lines. The stream of the Illumination and the stream of the Reformation now flow together, and only an analysis of the water reveals the difference in chemical elements. The microscopic test would divide to a greater or less extent every denomination whose members are, to any degree, in touch with the movements of modern religious thought. The difference between these two types of Christianity is far more radical than the difference which exists among the different evangelical denominations.

It is considered, however, indelicate to call attention to this simple fact. For the most impressive phase of our modern Christian life is its note of kindliness and liberality. The religious spirit of our times tends to a loving tolerance, and often to a sentimental dilettanteism that emasculates personal conviction. Protestants everywhere no longer are placing the emphasis upon their differences, but upon their agreements. In such a climate there is danger that tolerance will run to seed. There

<sup>1</sup>Forsyth: "The Person and Place of Jesus Christ," pp. 188-189.

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widely prevails, strikingly alike in its appearance to the liberality that is laudable, a liberality that is as deadly as it is false. Many are maintaining that Jesus was mistaken in regard to His teachings upon future punishment: "Our loving heavenly Father will not suffer any to be lost," is the easy, complacent creed of thousands who retain their membership in our evangelical churches. They do nothing to seek the lost, for they expect the lost to be saved anyhow, or if they are lost, nothing very harmful will happen to them. The Gospel becomes not only old fashioned but out of date.

The pulpit is affected by the modern spirit. The minister of to-day is more courteous, more cultured, more widely read, more skilled in exegesis, more closely in touch with the world, more Sadducean if you please. He has a larger work, a larger church and a larger outlook than any minister of any preceding period. His sermons are shorter, clearer, more ethical, more entertaining, richer in illustration, more sweetly persuasive, charged more fully with the spirit of brotherliness. There are three notable groups in the present Protestant ministry. 1. Those who are in touch with the spirit of the age and who are seeking to adjust their message to the new intellectual conditions; 2. Those who hold tenaciously to the old statements of doctrine and whose chief joy is to contend for the faith; 3. Finally those who are carefully guarded in their pulpit ministrations, and who deplore as doubtful disputations the public discussions of the living

questions in religious thought. The pathfinders, the creed-defenders, and the phrase-makers make up the larger part of our modern evangelical ministry. Such a division, based upon mental temperament and attitude, is possible only because of the unusual if not unparalleled situation which those who are called to interpret Christianity now face.

*The spread of the democratic spirit; the untrammelled assertion of human opinions and the breaking down of the accepted standards of authority increase the difficulties in proving the truthfulness, the power and the practical value of the Gospel.* Freedom furnishes the individual with the fullest opportunity for self-realization, but it does not determine the character of the self-realization. Freedom is equally the originating condition of wickedness as it is of righteousness. Freedom is a trust involving the peril of moral disaster as well as the promise of moral achievement and power. Religious freedom to-day is held too lightly. The modern man desires the utmost freedom in thought and action, but he resolutely refuses to cultivate the sense of responsibility which this freedom involves. The essence of sin, as it is revealed in the story of Eden, is the extension of knowledge and power without a corresponding extension of reverence and devotion to God. Freedom misused produces the malady of unbelief and inevitably robs the Gospel of its life-giving power. The malady is widespread.

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### THE INTERPRETATION OF THE PRESENT IN THE LIGHT OF THE PAST

The conditions we now face cannot be clearly seen unless they are set forth in the light of their historical background. Religion successively passes through the different moods of the Greek verb: the indicative, the imperative, the subjunctive, and the optative. The indicative mood is the mood of simple affirmation; the imperative mood voices authority; the subjunctive mood strikes the note of hesitancy and doubt; the optative mood is the mood of wistfulness and hope. Christianity has passed through one of the cycles of these moods, and is nearing the completion of a second cycle.

During the first three centuries when Christianity made conquest of the Roman Empire, the Gospel was declared in the indicative mood: "That which we have heard; that which we have seen with our eyes; that which we have looked upon with growing wonder; we declare unto you." The Master confided His Gospel to the free and living preaching of His disciples, assisted by the Spirit, and the first three centuries confirmed His wise choice. The succeeding eight centuries marked the disappearance of the indicative mood and the rise of the imperative mood. First, the bishops began to speak in commanding tones; then the Councils asserted their authority and finally the Bishop of Rome declared himself "the Vicar of Christ"—the voice of God on earth. The Roman Catholic Church is religion in the imperative

mood. The subjunctive mood appeared, manifested by a growing doubt and hesitancy on the part of the thoughtful in accepting the dogmas of the church. Science began its age-long conflict with authority. Philosophy interrogated and sometimes was bold enough to deny the decrees of the church. Immediately preceding the Reformation there was a period of wistfulness, a bitter unrest, that passed only with the triumph of the Reformation. This optative mood marked the end of the first cycle.

The Reformers reintroduced the Gospel in the indicative mood. They declared that which they had seen and experienced, and the Gospel, simply and affirmatively declared, shook the Church of Rome to its very foundation. Again the indicative mood passed into the imperative mood. Freedom of inquiry brought only organized division. Creeds were made and tests were set up. Christian churches were organized, bearing such names as would mark their peculiarities. Each denomination sought to preserve and promulgate its peculiar views. Protestants became persecutors, and while they never reached the excesses and cruelties of the Romanists, they declared the right to exercise the same authority over others in matters of belief. The nineteenth century was preëminently the century of the subjunctive mood. It was the age of doubt. To quote Henry Van Dyke: "Its coat of arms was an interrogation point rampant above three bishops dormant; and its motto 'Query.'" Science was never so boastful, so aggressive, so

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triumphant as it was during the close of the nineteenth century. The literature of the century was pervaded by agnosticism. Matthew Arnold thus draws the picture :

“The Sea of Faith  
Was once too at the full, and round earth's shore  
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled ;  
But now I only hear  
Its melancholy, long-withdrawing roar,  
Retreating to the breath  
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear  
And naked shingles of the world.”<sup>1</sup>

There are many reasons for the belief that the subjunctive mood is now passing into the optative ; out of doubt into hopefulness. There is world-wide longing for a clearer vision of God, a world-wide passion for truth, a finer realization that man is incurably religious. Beyond the present optative mood, with its wistfulness and yearning, there waits a new indicative mood—another great epoch in the history of Christian faith.

There is an orderly sequence not only in the spirit of Christian thought, but also in the thought itself. Christian theology has completed a cycle covering nearly two thousand years. The historical development of doctrine is identical with the logical development of doctrine. This is evident when the divisions of any standard work on theology are placed side by side with the doctrines as they historically appear. The first century fur-

<sup>1</sup> “Dover Beach.”

nished the historical data regarding the founding of the Christian faith. The second century vindicated the fundamental ideas of religion. The third and the fourth centuries formulated the doctrine of the Trinity. The theological discussions of the fifth century gathered about the nature of Man. From the fifth to the seventh century the foremost subject was the Person of Christ. The eighth to the tenth century was marked by the development of the doctrine of the Church. The eleventh to the sixteenth centuries dealt with the Atonement. From the Reformation to the middle of the nineteenth century, the leading doctrines discussed pertained to Soteriology, beginning with Justification by Faith. The modern age has taken the keenest interest in the study of Eschatology.

When we seek to discover the underlying cause for this identity of historical development of doctrine and logical development of doctrine, it is found in the fact that each dogma has grown out of the effort to solve some religious problem as it existed at a definite period in the past. Thus the formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity led logically to the consideration of the problem of human nature, and out of this investigation came the doctrine of Man. Each formulated doctrine was at the time of its historical appearance a new theological construction, and each doctrine was supposed to be a true and final solution for the all overshadowing problem of that particular period.

The theological cycle is complete and theology

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is a finished science or it is to be reviewed if not revised from beginning to end. Deductive logic has dominated theology in the past. Inductive logic, the method of thinking by which modern science has made its marvellous progress, has appeared in the field of theology within recent years, and Christian students are investigating the Christian experience in order that they may discover the laws and principles, or using a theological term, the doctrines, that underlie the experience. If a new theological cycle is about to begin and inductive logic is the method of investigation and proof, then the first subject will not be the fundamentals of religion or the doctrine of God, but the doctrine or the nature of Man, for inductive logic always begins with the facts at hand.

The interpretation of the present in the light of the past leads to the conclusion that the conditions are on the whole unfavourable to Christianity; that the prevailing mood within the Christian bodies is one of uncertainty and wistful yearning and that the leading question which the logic of the age-long religious thought-movements thrusts upon the consideration of Christian thinkers is: "What is Man?" and before this question can be answered another must be asked and answered, "What is the Child?"

### WHAT SOCIETY DEMANDS OF CHRISTIANITY

In putting Christianity to the test, modern society makes no unreasonable demand. Society

does not ask that Christianity shall bring about at once a new social order wherein righteousness shall reign, but society does insist that those organizations which assume to represent Jesus Christ in the world shall furnish reasonable proof that through the agencies of these religious bodies the coming generation shall in every way be better. Civilization challenges Christianity to solve the problem of the child. Christianity is now asked to establish its claims and to prove its value by showing what it is able to do for the child, as well as for the man and for society. The tests of proof, power and practical value which civilization imposes are being made in the domain of child development. We, the representatives of Jesus Christ, must prove that our analysis of the child's needs and our ministry to these needs give us the right to train the child; we must establish the fact that our instruction develops the child's latent powers and stimulates all of his activities that make for heroic moral character, and we must show that the permanent betterment of society necessitates the acceptance of our ideals, the adoption of our methods and the seeking of our ends in the training of children.

The chief interest of the Home, the School, the State, the Church, Social Reform and Christian Theology centres in the child.

The best in the spirit of the eighteenth century is expressed in the words of its greatest thinker, Immanuel Kant, who said: "Amidst all my doubts and speculations, there are two things that always

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strike me with awe—the starry firmament above me and the moral law within me.” The spirit of the twentieth century speaks in these words of the greatest of child psychologists, G. Stanley Hall: “There is one thing in nature, and one alone, fit to inspire all true men and women with more awe and reverence than Kant’s starry heavens, and that is the soul and body of the healthy young child. Heredity has freighted it with all the accumulated results of parental well and ill doing, and filled it with reverberations from a past more vast than science can explore; and on its right development depends the entire development of civilization two or three decades hence. Simple as childhood seems, there is nothing harder to know; and responsive as it is to every influence about it, there is nothing harder to guide. Just to guide inanimate nature, we must constantly study, love and obey it; so as to control the child nature, we must first, and perhaps still more piously, study, love and obey it.”<sup>1</sup>

The problem of society, as this generation is coming to recognize it, is the providing of an ideal environment for the growth of the child. The question which society asks regarding every social institution is, “Does this institution contribute directly or indirectly to the enrichment, the freedom and the truest advancement of the child?” And the day of judgment is coming for the institutions that fail. A new social order is to be built about the child. We stand upon the threshold of

<sup>1</sup> Hall: *The North American Review*, 1885.

a new era as notable in the way as the Reformation or the rise of democracy. It is marked by a new distinguishing religious characteristic and a new principle of government; the characteristic, the new valuation of the child, evidenced by a clearer, fuller recognition of his mental, moral and religious rights; the principle—a government of the people, by the people, for and in the interest of all the children of the people. The present age is democratic, the coming age will be “paidocratic.” A little child shall be the centre of civilization in the coming days; and, therefore, the test of Christianity in our day is its ability and its willingness to usher in the paidocratic age.

The test which civilization imposes upon Christianity is not the supreme or the final test. We who feel the sweep and the passion of the Master’s heart as the whole gamut of emotion is run from sweet, loving, winsome tenderness for the little ones, to hot, blasting indignation for those who would cause a little child to go astray, know that it is the Master’s will that all the institutions of society shall minister primarily unto the child, and that His test for every individual life, as well as His test for every social organization, is the faithfulness and the efficiency with which they further the spiritual well-being of the child.

Since we must know what we are undertaking to do for the child, and must be able to furnish the reasons for the methods we employ, the theology of the child nature takes the first place, and imperatively

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demands immediate consideration. Ecclesiastical assumptions are being brought under the scrutiny of a scientific investigation. Exegetical inferences are being forced to find a foundation upon the established facts of religious experience. Every denomination is being called upon to stand forth and defend its treatment of the child and give its interpretation of child nature. It is no time for loose thinking or for falling back upon the heathenish inheritance of the magical benefits in religious forms. The religious body which establishes its right to direct the religious development of the child must found that right upon the teachings of science and Scripture and must prove the validity of its positions by inspiring those whom it trains to live the Christlike life.

### IS CONVERSION NECESSARY TO THE FULLEST SELF-REALIZATION OF THE CHILD?

“The problem of mankind is the problem of the child.” Never has the urgency of the problem been more felt than now. The most important, the most vital phase of the problem of the child is the religious development of the child. The issue between evangelical Christianity and all other forms of Christianity relates to the necessity of conversion, an inward change which on the human side is wrought by personal faith in Jesus Christ. This is the crux of the whole problem. The purpose of the series of lectures which follow is to investigate and to discover whether, upon

scientific grounds, conversion and all of its correlatives are necessary factors in the religious development of the child.

At first glance it may not appear that the necessity of the conversion of children should be the focal point where all modern interests converge and where all modern divisions within Christianity appear. But he who reflects will readily see that the child, being the intermediary between the present and the future, is, therefore, the point of contact for every interest which seeks a permanent place in our modern life. The future of the Home, the State, the School, as well as that of Christianity, is committed to the keeping of the child. The question which conversion evokes is simply this: "Is the child able to attain the fullest, richest life without that experience which is called conversion?" This is answered in the affirmative by the great majority of those who claim to be Christians. Two lines of argument are offered for the statement that the child does not need to be converted.

The one, representing the sacramentarian idea, declares that the child is saved by baptism. The foremost exponent of this theory is the Roman Catholic Church, which maintains with dogmatic assertiveness that the sacraments produce spiritual change, that the forms of the Church possess saving power and that the child, therefore, does not need to be converted but needs only to be baptized. This conception arose in the early Christian cen-

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turies, and is traceable directly to the Oriental cults which found their way westward a century or more before the birth of Christ. To this conception is due the fact that more than nine-tenths of the Christians of the world still practice infant baptism. Even among those who are so thoroughly evangelical as to deny any benefit arising out of the religious forms and ceremonies, there is a feeling that it is better to have the child baptized. The interpretation of child nature which inheres in infant baptism still obtains, due to the fact that the human race is so slow to free itself from the enslaving belief in the magical value of religious forms.

The other division agrees with the Sacramentarians in saying that the child needs no conversion, but upon wholly different grounds. The Romanist baptizes the infant for the purpose of eradicating original sin. The Christian of to-day who says that the child needs no conversion does not believe in original sin and maintains that either because of the benefits which have come through the death of Christ, or because of the inherent goodness of human nature, the child is in the Kingdom and "needs only to be guarded lest he be converted away from the Heavenly Kingdom into which he was born." Dr. Charles W. Rishell, of Boston University, says: "Conversion is an event which ought not to be necessary in the conscious life of any human being. It must be said in truth that the New Testament conception of conversion is

that it ought not to have been necessary. It is urged upon adults who have lived for many years in a state of moral obliquity and alienation from God. All the presuppositions of conversion—the new birth, adoption, justification, or whatever other terms are employed to express the new life and the new relationships assumed by the convert—are connected with the thought of a life of sin previous to the change. In the present day idea of conversion, the same presuppositions prevail, whether the conversion be that of an adult or of a child. Conversion, in other words, presupposes a previous life of sin. Unless such a life is unavoidable, conversion must be regarded as a means adapted to do away with the abnormal and to introduce normal conditions. How vastly better it would be to prevent the abnormal conditions—the long continued life of sin that makes conversion necessary! This is just what a correct conception of child religion effectively realized would accomplish. A religious life beginning with the life of the child and never lost, would make conversion unnecessary, because the occasion for it would be obviated.”<sup>1</sup>

#### THE SUPREME IMPORTANCE OF CONVERSION

Seemingly the question as to the conversion of children presents an issue of interest only to those who are engaged in their religious instruction. But this conclusion must not be hastily accepted. Our age is dominated by the scientific spirit. We

<sup>1</sup> Rishell : “The Child as God’s Child,” pp. 31–32.

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care little for speculation and theories ; much for facts and laws. Man is interested in the study of all facts which enrich his knowledge of human personality. The genetic psychologist, studying psychic facts, begins with the little child. He desires to know whether conversion is necessary to the child's fullest self-realization. The State is ever concerned as to its future and fortifies itself against internal discord and lawlessness by the training and education of children. The chief endeavour of the State, as it operates through the public school, is to understand the nature of the child, and to develop all his mental and moral powers. The State needs to know, if so it be, in what way its educational system fails to develop all the latent powers of the child ; and this the State does fail to do, if conversion marks the bursting forth of powers latent in the child.

Philosophers in the past have sought to answer the question : " What is man ? " but they are learning that the primary question in interpreting human experience is, " What is the child ? " Philosophy is therefore interested in the question regarding the necessity of conversion. Theologians, having surveyed the whole system of Christian doctrine, and having caught something of the scientific spirit, begin their theological revision by studying inductively the facts of the Christian experience. Before the Christian experience can be fully interpreted, the theologian must investigate human experience which begins with the study of the child.

Furthermore his whole theological system will be determined by whether he makes conversion the genesis of Christian experience.

The characteristic of our age is an intelligently guided interest in the development of the child. The twentieth century is the century of the child. Whatever pertains to the highest good of the child commands universal attention. If conversion is necessary for the child's highest good, all men should know it. But those who are most deeply interested are the ones who assume to represent Christ in the world. Some of them, in the light of Scripture and experience, declare that the highest good of the child cannot be attained except by an interior, voluntary act of the soul—the experience of conversion. In view of the social, scientific, philosophical and theological interest which is being taken in the child, this statement challenges universal attention. The issue is central and crucial.

If the Christian world could agree upon the nature of the child and his needs, Christian union could be readily realized. The child is set for the rising and falling of the Christian Israel. The organic, doctrinal and ceremonial differences of denominations grow out of the differences in the interpretation of the child's nature and needs. Therefore, there is no living question which brings with it a stronger claim upon the attention of the honest Christian thinker than the one involving the necessity of conversion in the religious development of the child.

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The theological aspect of this question recalls a controversy in the fifth century between Augustine and Pelagius. The effort then was to interpret the nature of man so as to harmonize the Scriptures and Greek philosophy. Now the effort is to interpret the nature of the child so as to harmonize the Scriptures and science. Then the key-word to all thinking was "being," and nature meant the condition or state of man; now the key-word of all thinking is "becoming," and though the word "nature" is still used, it refers not so much to the state as to the process. Then the interpretation was expressed in terms that describe the static; now the interpretation must be expressed in the terms that describe the dynamic.

The Sacramentarian's interpretation of child nature, defended by all those who believe in baptismal regeneration, is a reversion to the belief in the magical effect of religious forms, a phase characteristic of all pagan religions, as well as those Christian bodies who have compromised with paganism. The insistence that the child needs no conversion because he is born in the Kingdom of God is a revival of Pelagianism and in its present form may properly be called the New Pelagianism. From the viewpoint of theology, the place of the child in Christian thinking outranks in its importance any other living question offered for our consideration. It is the vital issue in the discussions of Sunday-school organization and inter-denominational coöperation. It is the issue which lies behind the growing oppo-

sition to the extra-Biblical lessons in the new graded series. It is coming to be the dividing issue revealing the difference between those who are influenced by the Reformation movement, and those who are influenced by the Illumination movement. It is making evident the difference between the Christianity founded upon redemption and the Christianity founded upon culture. Instead of this question being merely an interesting problem in Christian pedagogy, its implications involve every important issue before the civilized world.

## II

### THE CHURCHES AND THE CHILD

PROF. GEO. A. COE, writing in "The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics," says: "As a general rule, the religions of the world show slight recognition or none at all of childhood's capacity for religion; but the supposed attainment of such capacity at puberty has been signalized the world over by initiations which are commonly both religious and civic.<sup>1</sup> Christianity, however, has shown a tendency to push backward towards infancy the date, not so much of initiation (of confirmation, reception into church-membership, etc.) as of recognized religiousness. The belief in the Fatherhood of God; the tenderness and sympathy that Christianity has always cultivated; Jesus' declaration that adults can enter the Kingdom only by becoming as little children, and His recognition of children as members of the Kingdom—these are among the causes why the Christian consciousness somewhat generally includes children within the Christian fellowship. By baptismal regeneration in infancy, or by virtue of a Divine 'covenant,' or by reason of the 'unconditioned benefits of the Atonement,' or because of the mere

<sup>1</sup> See G. Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," Chap. XIII.

atmosphere of the Gospel, most of the churches count children as members, and by few, if any, churches are they treated as mere outsiders. Within the evangelical movement which has emphasized personal religious experience, however, the position of children has been ambiguous. On the one hand, they are obviously not ripe for the evangelical type of experience; on the other hand, the evangelical love of souls could not leave children out. Here and there an evangelist has sought to convert even little children, but for the most part these churches have been content to teach (mainly in the Sunday-schools) in the hope that the pupils would some time attain the Christian experience.”<sup>1</sup>

The character and the content of the religious instruction of children are determined by the beliefs of the individual or the religious organization directing the instruction. The end in view necessarily determines the means which shall be used. The religious experience of the child will be modified if not controlled by the anticipations of his spiritual guides. The theology of the religious teacher, as it relates to child nature, becomes a vital matter in the child's religious development. The theology of any religious organization is in fact epitomized in its attitude towards the child. In it is involved the creed, the form of organization, the activities and the worship of the Church which stands for the interpretation. The differ-

<sup>1</sup> “Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics,” Vol. III, p. 520.

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ences which exist as to the interpretation of the child and the duties which grow out of this interpretation lie at the base of all the ecclesiastical divisions in Christendom. If all Christian bodies could agree as to the nature and the needs of the child, church union would no longer be merely a pleasing dream.

The attitudes which the different denominations sustain towards the child may be seen from three view-points: 1. The relation of the Church to infants; 2. The theological defense of the relationship; 3. The salvation of infants.

### THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO INFANTS

The Greek and the Roman Catholic Churches believe in infant baptismal regeneration and confirmation. They teach the parents of their communion that the child is given to them to rear but that he belongs to God and the Church. Among the Greek Catholics baptism, which is always by immersion, takes place as soon as the child is eight days old. Making the sign of the cross, exorcism by breathing upon the infant, the pouring on of oil, trine immersion followed immediately by confirmation are the leading features of the rite. Seven days later the infant is brought again to the church where the priest washes the infant's garments, cleanses the body with a sponge and dismisses the child with the following words: "Thou art now baptized, surrounded with a celestial light, fortified with the Sacrament of

Confirmation and sanctified and washed in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost." In the Russian Greek Catholic Church the service is more elaborate and includes the cutting in the form of a cross of some of the child's hair, the putting of salt into the infant's mouth, and the putting on of a clean shirt, the priest saying: "Thou art now as clean as this shirt and purified from the stain of original sin." A little cross is hung about the infant's neck and this he must always wear and at death it is to be buried with him. The priest announces the name of some saint who is to be the child's guardian and protector, the picture of whom he delivers into the godfather's hands, charging the sponsors to instruct the child in what manner he may venerate his patron saint.

Among Roman Catholics the greater part of the service called the sacrament of baptism takes place at the door of the church. Here the priest meets the procession and asks the godfather and godmother what child they present to the church, whether or no they are its true godfather and godmother, if they are resolved to live and die in the true Catholic and Apostolic faith, and what name they intend to give the child. After exhorting the sponsors, the priest asks the infant, "What dost thou demand of the Church?" The godfather answers, "Faith." The priest inquires, "What is the fruit of faith?" The godfather answers, "Eternal life." Breathing three times upon the

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face of the child, the priest says: "Depart from this child, thou evil spirit, and make room for the Holy Ghost." The sign of the cross is repeatedly made, prayers are offered, a pinch of salt is placed in the mouth of the child accompanied by the words, "Receive the salt of wisdom," the Prince of Darkness is exorcised and the procession led by the priest enters the church. Within the church the devil is exorcised once more, the priest taking the saliva from his mouth with the thumb of his right hand rubs the nostrils and ears, and as he touches the right ear he utters the Hebrew word, "Ephphatha," "Be thou opened." The godfather in behalf of the child renounces the devil, his works and his pomps. After the anointing with oil, the priest takes some of the baptismal water and pours thrice on the child's head in the form of the cross, saying, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Confirmation in most Roman Catholic lands is postponed until the adolescent age.

Among the Protestant bodies that practice infant baptism a simple service is provided which centres about the act of infant baptism. The Lutheran, the Anglican and the Episcopal Church in America retain the sponsors, but the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Congregational and other pedobaptist bodies require that the child shall be brought by those who are his natural spiritual guides, the parents, or those who stand *in loco parentis*.

Baptists, and other bodies who reject infant baptism, claim an equal if not a greater interest in the religious training and development of children, but on Scriptural and doctrinal grounds they reject infant baptism. They deny the efficacy of religious forms, and are concerned in securing the development of the child's inner life more than in thrusting upon him some ecclesiastical obligation which later in life he may be unwilling or unable to fulfill. They deny that the Scriptures anywhere enjoin infant baptism, but on the other hand the Scriptures make requirements for church-membership which infants, because of their immaturity, cannot possibly meet.

#### THE THEOLOGICAL DEFENSE OF THE RELATIONSHIP

The theological position of the Greek and Russian Catholic Church regarding infant salvation is set forth in the sixteenth decree of the Synod of Jerusalem (1672): "We believe that holy baptism, certainly instituted by God and administered in the name of the holy Trinity, is summarily necessary. For without it no one can be saved according to the teaching of the Lord: Except a man be born of water and of the Holy Spirit, he shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, it is necessary for little children also, as those who are free in the matter of original sin cannot be cleansed without baptism. . . . If there are little children, any one of them without salvation,

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they are also without baptism; and those who die unregenerated, even as those who have not received the remission of original sin, are necessarily cast into eternal punishment and consequently are not at all salvable without baptism: wherefore it is necessary that little children be baptized. Moreover concerning the salvation of little children it follows, as it is taught in Matthew: But he that is not baptized is not saved. Therefore it is necessary that little children be baptized.”<sup>1</sup>

The Council of Trent (1563) formulated in three articles the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church upon infant baptism and infant salvation:

“If any one denies that the said merit of Jesus Christ is applied, both to adults and to infants, by the sacrament of baptism rightly administered in the form of the church, let him be anathema.”

“If any one saith that baptism is free, that is not necessary to salvation, let him be anathema.”

“Forasmuch as, having been regenerated by the laver of baptism, and being incorporated with Christ they (infants) cannot at that age lose the grace which they have already acquired of being the sons of God.”<sup>2</sup>

The doctrine of baptism is thus stated in the catechism now in general use in American Catholic churches: “Baptism is absolutely necessary in order to be saved.” “The sacrament of baptism confers the first sanctifying grace and takes away original

<sup>1</sup> “The Eighteen Decrees of the Synod of Jerusalem.”

<sup>2</sup> “The Canons and Dogmatic Decrees of the Council of Trent.”

sin and also actual sin, if there is any ; it remits all the punishment due sin ; it imprints the character of a Christian ; it makes us children of God, members of the church, heirs of Heaven and renders us capable of receiving the other sacraments.”<sup>1</sup>

The Church of England declares that “Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christian men are discerned from others that are not christened ; but that it is also a sign of Regeneration or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the church ; the promises of the forgiveness of sin and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost are visibly signed and sealed ; faith is confirmed and grace increased by virtue of prayer to God. The baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the church as most agreeable with the institution of Christ.”<sup>2</sup>

The obscurity of this statement is somewhat relieved by the following quotation, taken from the prayer-book, giving the words which the minister utters immediately after the baptism of the infant : “Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerated and grafted into the body of Christ’s Church, let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits, and with one accord make our prayer unto Him, that this child may lead the rest of his life according to this beginning.” After which the minister leads in the following prayer :

<sup>1</sup> “The Abridgment of Christian Doctrine,” p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> “The Thirty-Nine Articles,” Article XXVIII.

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“We yield Thee hearty thanks, Most Merciful Father, that it has pleased Thee to regenerate this child with Thy Holy Spirit, and to receive him for Thine own child by adoption and to incorporate him into Thy Holy Church. And humbly we beseech Thee to grant that he, being dead to sin and living unto righteousness, and being buried with Christ in His death, may crucify the old man and utterly abolish the whole body of sin, and that as he is made partaker of the death of Thy Son, he may also be partaker of His resurrection, so that finally with the residue of Thy Holy Church he may be an inheritor of Thy Everlasting Kingdom, through Christ our Lord, Amen.”

Baptismal regeneration is assumed in addressing God, and it is difficult to understand why there should be any hesitancy in stating it plainly in the creed. The Episcopal Church teeters from the Roman and Greek Catholic doctrine of the magical efficacy of baptism to the evangelical doctrine of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.

The largest Protestant body in the world is the Lutheran Church, whose growth during the last decade in this country has been phenomenal. The Augsburg Confession Article 9 says, “Concerning baptism, our Church teaches that it is necessary to salvation, that through baptism the grace of God is offered, and that children are to be baptized, who being by baptism offered to God are received into His favour.” Professor Gerberding, commenting upon this, says: “The children

need grace ; baptism confers grace. It is especially adapted to impart spiritual blessings to these little ones. We cannot take the preached word, but we can take the sacramental word and apply it to them. God established infant membership in His Church ; He alone has a right to revoke it. He has never done so ; therefore, it stands. If the Old Testament covenant of grace embraces infants, the New is not narrower but wider.”<sup>1</sup> “The Lutheran children,” says G. Stanley Hall, “do not look forward to conversion, if they have been baptized in infancy and daily nurtured.” “They must not assume to be unregenerate but as already in a state of grace. The germs of spiritual life have early been planted and have grown with their growth, and they need no violent change or drastic religious experience. Religion is a growth, not a conquest.”<sup>2</sup>

Calvin held that regeneration, which the Roman Catholic Church declared to be the immediate result of baptism, was not tied to the sacrament: “for those who are baptized as infants God regenerates in childhood or adolescence, occasionally even in old age.”<sup>3</sup> He defends infant baptism upon the thesis that Christian baptism superseded Jewish circumcision. Both Luther and Calvin recognized that the infant was incapable of personal faith. Luther, in the rite of infant baptism,

<sup>1</sup> “The Way of Salvation,” p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> “Adolescence,” p. 277.

<sup>3</sup> “Tracts,” Vol. II, p. 218.

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continued the Roman Catholic *interrogatio de fide*, and in a measure the Roman Catholic doctrine, and assumed that the vicarious faith of the sponsors bestowed a kind of faith upon the child. Calvin declared that "infants may have infused into them a kind of faith and knowledge though not ours."

The First Helvetic Confession (1536) says, Article xxii, "We baptize our children because it is not right to deprive of the communion of God's people those who are born through us into the people of God, whereunto through the divine word are called and are, as far as man can judge, members of God's elect."

The French Confession of Faith (1559, Article xxxv) says: "Nevertheless, although it is a sacrament of faith and penitence, yet as God receives little children into the church with their fathers, we say upon the authority of Jesus Christ that the children of believing parents should be baptized."

The Belgic Confession, revised and approved by the Synod of Dort, says, Article xxxix: "Baptism is the substitute for circumcision; by it we are received into the Church of God. . . . Infants of believers ought to be baptized and sealed with the sign of the covenant. Christ shed His blood no less for the washing of the children of the faithful than for adult persons; and therefore they ought to receive the sign and sacrament of that which Christ has done for them. Moreover what circumcision was to the Jews, that baptism is to our chil-

dren. And for this reason Paul calls baptism the circumcision of Christ."

The Westminster Confessions, chapter xxviii, says: "Not only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized. Although it be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not annexed unto it, as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it, or that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated." The Presbyterian Directory for Worship, giving the reasons for infant baptism, says that "the rite was instituted by Christ; that it is a seal of the righteousness of faith; that the seed of the faithful have no less a right to this ordinance, under the Gospel, than the seed of Abraham to circumcision under the Old Testament; that Christ commanded all nations to be baptized, that He blessed little children, declaring of such was the Kingdom of Heaven; that little children are federally holy and therefore ought to be baptized; that we are by nature sinful, guilty and polluted, and have need of cleansing by the blood of Christ and by the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God."

The relation of the Methodist churches towards the child is not clearly defined, due primarily to the fact that within the different Methodist bodies this relation is in process of restatement. The Methodist Articles of Religion are modifications and revisions of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the

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Church of England. Original sin is affirmed: "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk) but it is the corruption of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness and of his own nature inclined to evil and that continually." The effect of the fall is such that no man can "turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and works to faith and calling upon God." Regarding baptism, they teach that it "is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but that it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church."

The Methodist churches make much of conversion, and while the ritual is strikingly similar to the service given in the Episcopal prayer-book for the baptism of infants, the interpretation of the rite in the past has been more closely akin to the Calvinistic interpretation. In the Episcopal Church, prayer is offered that the promises symbolized in the ritual act may then and there be initiated; in the Methodist Church, they pray that God may fulfill these results in the future. Leading Church of England theologians distinguish between regeneration and conversion and separate them by so far as the act of baptism antedates "the soul's turning to God in the desire to accept and to do His will."

Methodists in the past have held, in common with

other evangelicals, the belief that regeneration and conversion were coincident. But apparently the belief is growing that conversion is an abnormal religious experience and that the effort of the church should be to so direct the training of the child that conversion shall cease to be necessary. Evidence of this is found in statements such as the following: "The child does not need to be brought back into the Kingdom, because the child is already in the Kingdom. The great responsibility and the great duty of the Church, consequently, is not the rescue of little children but their preservation. They are in the Kingdom; our business is to see that they remain in the Kingdom. . . . We have baptized our children, and by that act we have declared them to be children of God and members of the Kingdom of Christ. We have proceeded to deal with them as if all implications of their baptism were false." <sup>1</sup>

The Northern Methodists have issued in recent years quite a number of books, all defending the position that the child is a member of the Kingdom of God, and made by baptism a probationary member of the Church. In 1864 F. G. Hibbard published the first of these books, "The Religion of Childhood," which was followed by Dr. R. J. Cooke's "Christianity and Childhood"; Dr. C. W. Rishell's "The Child as God's Child"; Dr. J. T. McFarland's brochure, "Preservation versus Rescue of the

<sup>1</sup> McFarland; "The Preservation versus the Rescue of the Child."

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Child," and the last book, Dr. W. A. Wright's "Moral Condition and Development of the Child." Bishop Atkins of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has put forth the same view in his book, "The Kingdom in the Cradle." All of these writers maintain on grounds of Scripture and dogma that little children have a spiritual life which they need never lose, and that the primary purpose of Christian instruction and training is to develop the divine life already present.

The first in this country to defend the proposition "that the child should grow up a Christian and never know himself as being otherwise," was Horace Bushnell, who, in 1847, published a book entitled "Christian Nurture." In this work he defends the thesis that "it is the very character and mark of all unchristian education to train up a child for future conversion." This view is to-day widely held but its exponents show forth a spirit more courteous and more distinctly Christian than is indicated by the utterances of Dr. Bushnell.

The religious status of the child came up for discussion at the recent General Conference of the Southern Methodist Church held at Asheville, N. C., in the year 1910, resulting in a radical change of the ritual pertaining to infant baptism. Before the change was made, the ritual read as follows: "Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are born in sin, our Saviour saith, 'Except a man be born again of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God,' I beseech you to call upon God

the Father, that out of His bounteous goodness He will grant unto this child, now to be baptized with water, that which by nature he cannot have, that he may be baptized with the Holy Spirit, received into Christ's Holy Church, and make a lively member of the same."<sup>1</sup> The necessity of conversion is clearly and definitely stated. Notice the following, which is now the form used throughout Southern Methodism: "Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men, though fallen in Adam, are born into this world in Christ the Redeemer, heirs of life eternal, subjects of the saving grace of the Holy Spirit, and that our Saviour Christ saith 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God,' I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of His bounteous goodness He will so grant unto this child now about to be baptized the continual replenishing of His grace, that he may ever remain in the fellowship of God's Holy Church by faith that is in Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup> Yet in the same volume from which the preceding quotation is taken, there is given the service for adult baptism, and here the minister says: "Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men do inherit a nature so fallen that no man of his own strength can so live as to please God, etc."<sup>3</sup> This statement, which is altogether satisfactory to the most avowed exponents of total depravity, indirectly opposes the statement made a few

<sup>1</sup> "The Doctrines and Discipline" (1906), p. 235.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* (1910), p. 357.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 362-3.

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pages earlier in the same ritual, where it says "all men are born into this world in Christ the Redeemer, heirs of eternal life, subjects of the saving grace of the Holy Spirit."

The historical confessions of Christendom agree in affirming that "man is born with a corrupt bias which was not his property from the beginning of the race." The Roman Church holds that the first man possessed in addition to the natural faculties of his soul habitual holiness and immortality. The Greek Church affirms that he possessed "immortality, perfect wisdom and a will regulated by reason." The Lutheran and the Reformed or Calvinistic Confessions describe his endowments as "a *justitia originalis* inwrought and belonging to his nature." The Arminian creeds affirm only his innocence and hope of continuance in being. Through Adam's sin the Roman Church teaches that Adam and his posterity lost habitual holiness and immortality, and the will of every man towards goodness was weakened. The Greek Church teaches that he and his posterity lost immortality and that the will received a distinct bias towards evil. The Lutheran and the Reformed creeds teach that he and his posterity lost the *justitia originalis*, and that in spiritual things there entered a total corruption of his nature. The Arminian creeds teach that Adam and his posterity lost their destined freedom from death, and now in consequence of repeated sinning, man's nature is firmly held by a bias towards evil.

The two Catholic bodies, together with the Lu-

theran and Reformed Churches, assert that in this state the natural man, even before he commits actual sin, is a sinner before God because of original or inherited sin. The Arminians teach that the bias towards evil in man is not in itself sin. The Greek Church holds that evil concupiscence is positively original sin while the Roman Church teaches that it in itself is not but only leads to sin. The Lutheran and the Reformed Confessions teach that man following his evil desire commits manifold sin, being unable altogether to do what is pleasing to God and able to do nothing but sin. The Arminian creeds affirm that man is not wholly bad but is able to do some good.<sup>1</sup>

All agree that salvation was wrought by Jesus Christ; differences appear in defining the part the so-called sacraments take in securing the regeneration of man. The Roman and the Greek churches are agreed as to the magical efficacy of these forms and their absolute necessity in the securing of salvation; baptism entirely destroys original sin and therefore baptism must be administered to all infant children of Christians. The Lutheran Confessions define the sacraments as visible signs which communicate to Christians the invisible grace of God though faith is needed; baptism administered to the children of Christians abolishes the guilt of original sin without destroying the sin itself. The Reformed Confessions define the sacraments as the sign and seal of divine grace, and the baptism of

<sup>1</sup> Winer: "Creeds of Christendom," pp. 374 f.

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children is enjoined upon the basis of a covenant relation existing between believing parents and God, and it is "a great sin to condemn or neglect this ordinance." The Arminian creeds hold that the sacraments are ceremonies which sensibly exhibit the spiritual covenant between God and man and that baptism may be administered to the children of Christians.<sup>1</sup>

The creedal statements of the Roman and the Greek Catholic have not been modified since their formulation. They hold uncompromisingly to the statement that children must be baptized in order to be saved and without baptism they are lost. The evangelical principle, reintroduced by the Reformers, laid stress upon personal faith. Intelligence and moral choice are the originating conditions of the faith which lays hold of the Gospel. These conditions infant children are unable to meet. Infant baptism, inherited by the Reformers from the Church of Rome, became a source of keenest embarrassment to all the Reformers. Not many Protestants were willing to accept the logical conclusion and give up the practice of infant baptism. Luther taught in his Larger Catechism: "In the absence of faith, baptism continues to be only a bare and ineffectual sign," and as Harnack points out: "then infant baptism is no sacrament but an ecclesiastical observance; if it is in a strict sense a sacrament, then that principle is no longer valid." In Luther's failure to do away with "infant bap-

<sup>1</sup> Winer: "Creeds of Christendom," pp. 380 f.

tism," Harnack adds: "The most splendid jewel of evangelical Christianity became robbed of its practical power—became, that is, of no effect."<sup>1</sup>

The issue produced a threefold division in the religious bodies of the Reformation: 1. The churches with national affiliations, such as the Lutheran and the Anglican, drew back from the evangelical position and retained infant baptism accepting baptismal regeneration in a modified form. 2. The Reformed churches retained infant baptism but gave it a different significance. 3. A number of small bodies accepted the logical conclusion of the evangelical principle and adopted believers' baptism.

No important theological change is recorded until 1910 when the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, revised its ritual and by a dogma declared that infant children were, because of their membership in the Kingdom of God, fitted to be probationary members of the Methodist Church. The doctrine has been widely discussed and claims many adherents outside of the Methodist Church. Its advocates declare that conversion is not a necessary experience in the child's religious development, and in making this claim they revive the teaching of Pelagius in a new and more attractive form.

All pedobaptist bodies agree that through baptism the infant is received into the visible church, but only the Greek Catholic Church practices infant communion. The Greek Catholic, the Roman

<sup>1</sup> Harnack: "History of Dogma," Vol. VII, p. 252.

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Catholic, the Lutheran and the Anglican churches believe in baptismal regeneration although the two latter require personal faith before the child is admitted to full fellowship. These two churches distinguish between regeneration wrought in baptism and the child's conversion which is conditioned upon faith. Confirmation, which in the Roman Catholic, the Lutheran and the Anglican churches takes place early in the adolescent period, ushers the child into all the privileges of church-membership. The Reformed or Presbyterian churches inform children, baptized in infancy, "when they come to the years of discretion, if they are free from scandal, appear sober and steady and have sufficient knowledge to discern the Lord's body," that "it is their duty and their privilege to come to the Lord's Supper."<sup>1</sup> Methodists receive children, baptized in infancy, "as soon as they apprehend the responsibilities involved in a public profession of faith in Christ and give evidence of a sincere and earnest determination to discharge the same."<sup>2</sup>

All these churches limit whatever benefits which they attribute to infant baptism to the children of parents, one of whom at least is a professing Christian. The Congregationalists of New England at one period of their history extended the privilege to unregenerate parents who gave an intellectual assent to Christianity. To Congregationalists to-day the service is little more than the dedication of the

<sup>1</sup> "The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church," p. 440.

<sup>2</sup> "The Doctrines and Discipline," p. 110.

child. How far this conception holds in other denominations it is impossible to learn, for on the part of the ministry as well as the laity there is increasing liberty exercised in the acceptance or rejection of creedal statements.

Baptist Confessions of Faith constitute the latest group of the confessions of Christendom. These confessions represent no ecclesiastical authority, since Baptists are congregational and democratic. Any Baptist Church has the right to prepare and adopt its own confession of faith. In the statements of doctrine which have been adopted by groups of Baptist churches, and which invite, therefore, the attention of the student of Church History, there is found wide diversity. Some are Arminian and some out-Calvin Calvin. There is, however, a sustained movement from the Arminianism of the Anabaptists and early Baptists to the modified Calvinism of the Baptist bodies of to-day.

The earliest Anabaptist document, "The VII Articles from Schlatten am Randen drawn up Feb. 24, 1527," says: "Baptism ought to be administered to all who have been taught repentance and a change of life and in truth believe their sins have been blotted out through Christ and wholly wish to walk in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and who wish to be buried with Him into death that they may be able to rise again with Him. To all, then, who ask baptism after this manner and make the request of us for themselves we administer it. By these means are excluded all baptism of infants, the

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supreme abomination of the Roman Pontiff.”<sup>1</sup> The Standard Baptist Confession, published in 1660, prepared by representatives of many English congregations, in Article XI says: “And as for all such who preach not this Doctrine but instead thereof that Scriptureless thing of Sprinkling of Infants *falsly called Baptisme* whereby the *pure word of God is made of no effect* and the new Testament way of bringing in members into the Church by regeneration cast out . . . all such we utterly deny, forasmuch as we are commanded to have *no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather to reprove them* (Eph. v. 11).”<sup>2</sup> The most important Confession prepared by the English Calvinistic Baptists, adopted in 1689, says nothing in its articles of faith bearing directly upon infant baptism, but the following is pertinent: “Those who actually profess repentance towards *God*, faith in and obedience to our Lord Jesus are the only proper subjects of this ordinance.”<sup>3</sup> From their earliest history, Baptists have placed the emphasis upon the evangelical principle and therefore have restricted baptism to those who voluntarily profess their personal faith in Jesus Christ. The incapacity of infants to exercise personal faith is thus the ground for the rejection of infant baptism.

### THE SALVATION OF INFANTS

The doctrines of infant damnation and the non-

<sup>1</sup> McGlothlin : “ Baptist Confessions of Faith,” p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 270.

election of infants were unknown to the writers of the New Testament and the post-apostolic church fathers. Aristides, in his "Apology," says: "And when a child is born to any of them, they praise God; again if it chance to die in its infancy they praise God mightily as if for one who has passed through the world without sins." The early acceptance of baptismal regeneration led to the teaching that only the baptized could attain the blessedness of heaven. Gregory of Nazianzus says: "Others have it not in their own power to receive it (baptism) because of their infancy perhaps. . . . The last sort will neither be glorified nor punished by the just Judge; as being without the seal, but not through their own wickedness; but as having suffered the last rather than occasioned it."<sup>1</sup> Augustine may justly be called the founder of the doctrine of the damnation of infants. He expresses the hope that theirs will be "the gentlest condemnation of all." "Which as I am not able to define what or how great it will be; as I dare not say that it would be better for them not to be at all than to be in that state."<sup>2</sup> The Roman Church teaches that unbaptized children are sent to hell but that they are assigned to a separate place in the *limbus infantum*; a higher part of the *Infernus* which the fires cannot reach and where they undergo a penalty of loss (*pœnam damni*). Some Roman Catholic theologians hold that the punish-

<sup>1</sup> Wall: "History of Infant Baptism," Vol. I, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 457.

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ment is only the deprivation of the vision of God. In the Roman Church three kinds of baptism are recognized: water, blood and desire. The third kind includes those who, desiring baptism, cannot secure the same; they are considered baptized because of the desire. The assumption of this desire, on the part even of unborn infants, furnishes a basis for the salvation of Roman Catholic babies who die before they are baptized with water.

The Augsburg Confession gives the Lutheran position: "Concerning baptism our churches teach that it is necessary to salvation." Luther himself says in his Larger Catechism: "In the first place it is important above all things to know well the words upon which baptism is founded, and to which everything pertains that is to be said upon the subject, namely, where the Lord Christ speaks (Matt. xxviii. 19), 'Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.' . . . In these words we must notice, in the first place, that here stands God's commandment and institution that we shall not doubt that baptism is divine, and not devised and invented by men. For as truly as I can say that no man has spun the Ten Commandments, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer out of his head but that they are revealed and given by God Himself, so also I can boast that baptism is no human trifle, but that it is instituted by God Himself, and that it is most solemnly and rigidly commanded that we must be baptized or we cannot be saved."

Unbaptized infants according to this view are lost.

The Anglican Church has steadily refused to make any statement as to the destiny of unbaptized infants. Hooker says of them that they are those "whose safety we are not absolutely able to warrant." Dr. Wall, in his monumental work, "The History of Infant Baptism," says: "Concerning the everlasting state of an infant that by misfortune dies unbaptized the Church of England has determined nothing (it were fit that all churches would leave such things to God) save that they forbid the ordinary office for burial to be used for such an one; for that were to determine the point and acknowledge him for a Christian brother."<sup>1</sup>

Calvin held the doctrine of the salvation of infants through election. "Though sin does not yet appear in them," he says, "yet it is latent; for they bear corruption shut up in the soul, so that before God they are damnable." The Calvinistic position is set forth in the Westminster Confession, Chapter X, "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth." The logical implication is that there are non-elect infants who are damned. There can be but little doubt that this was the conviction of the Westminster divines. But the hearts of Christian men have grown tenderer with the years. The different Presbyterian bodies have sought to interpret this

<sup>1</sup> Wall: "History of Infant Baptism," p. 470.

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article so as to extend the benefits of election. Indeed, some modification of Calvin's position was undertaken very early. The Canons of the Synod of Dort (1619) declared that in virtue of the covenant of grace, "godly parents have no reason to doubt of the election and salvation of their children whom it pleaseth God to call out of this life in their infancy." But no hope was held out for other infants; for the Synod of Dort also says: "That there is an election and reprobation of infants no less than of adults, we cannot deny in the face of God who loves and hates unborn children." The Second Scotch Confession (1580) takes a further step: "We abhor and detest the cruel judgment against infants dying without baptism."

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1813 revised the Westminster Confession changing "the elect infant clause" to the following: "All infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth; so also are others who have never had the exercise of reason and who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word." In 1883 the article underwent further revision and now reads: "All infants dying in infancy and all persons who have never had the faculty of reason are regenerated and saved."

In 1902-3 the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America made the following "Declamatory Statement" regarding infant salvation: "With

reference to chapter x, section 3 of the Confession of Faith, that it is not to be regarded as teaching that any who die in infancy are lost. We believe that all dying in infancy are included in the election of grace and are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit who works when and where and how He pleases." The Presbyterian Church in the United States, better known as the Southern Presbyterian Church, recently recommended a change in the article so as to read: "Being elect, all infants dying in infancy, etc." The statement is somewhat obscure but evidently a break has been made with the doctrine of election as held by the Westminster divines and further revision logically will follow. Modern Presbyterians are endeavouring to apply the doctrine of election in a way so that all infants, dying in infancy baptized or unbaptized, are declared to be saved.

Fletcher of Madeley, stating the Methodist position, says: "As Adam brought a general condemnation and a universal seed of death upon all infants, so Christ brings upon them a general justification and a universal seed of life." The Methodist churches have never found any theological difficulties in believing that all infants dying in infancy were saved.

The Anabaptists and the early Baptists, like the Methodists of to-day, were Arminian in their theology. One of the earliest Confessions made by English Baptists living in Amsterdam about 1612 says: "That infants are conceived and born in

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innocency without sin and that so dying are undoubtedly saved and that this is to be understood of all infants under heaven (Gen. v. 2 ; i. 27 compared with 1 Cor. xv. 49), for where there is no law there is no transgression ; sin is not imputed while there is no law (Rom. iv. 15 and v. 13 ; Matt. xiii. 9 ; Neh. viii. 3)."<sup>1</sup> This is probably the first theological statement which can be found between the second and the seventeenth centuries in which the universal salvation of all infants dying in infancy is affirmed. In the Standard Confession of English Baptists published in 1660 it is declared "that all children dying in infancy, having not actually transgressed against the Law of God in their own persons, are only subject to the first death which comes upon them by the sin of the first *Adam* from which they shall all be raised by the second *Adam* and not that any one of them (dying in that estate) shall suffer Adam's sin, eternal punishment in Hell (which is the second death) *for of such belongs the Kingdom of Heaven* (1 Cor. xv. 22 ; Matt. xix. 14), not daring to conclude with that uncharitable opinion of others who though they plead much for the bringing of children into the visible church here on earth by *Baptism*, yet by their Doctrine that Christ dyed but for some shut a great part of them out of the Kingdome of Heaven forever."<sup>2</sup>

"The Orthodox Creed," 1678, which sought "to unite and to confirm all true Protestants in the

<sup>1</sup> McGlothlin: "Baptist Confessions of Faith," p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

fundamental articles of the Christian religion against the errors and heresies of Rome," makes this statement: "But the popish doctrine which they teach and believe that these infants that die without baptism or have it not actually or in desire, are not nor cannot be saved, we do not believe. . . . Neither do we believe that infants dying in infancy without baptism go to purgatory or limbus infantum as they erroneously teach."<sup>1</sup>

The Calvinistic Baptists who in London prepared "The Assembly Confession of Faith" reproduced word for word the Westminster Confession: "Elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth."<sup>2</sup> This confessional statement was adopted by the group of American Baptist churches composing the Philadelphia Association in 1743 and is popularly known as "the Philadelphia Confession."

"The New Hampshire Confession," the one most widely used to-day throughout the American Baptist churches, says nothing regarding the salvation of infants. Modern American Baptists hold to a modified Calvinism and believe in the salvation of infants. From the Baptist view-point, infant salvation is not clearly and convincingly stated in the Scriptures, but the whole attitude of Jesus towards children, the absence of the moral powers which make possible actual sin, the belief in the goodness

<sup>1</sup> McGlothlin: "Baptist Confessions of Faith," p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 244.

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and the infinite love of God, form a strong inferential argument for the salvation of little children.

The present population of the world is over one billion five hundred million ; one-third of the population is nominally Christian ; less than one-third of the Christian population is Protestant. The Greek and Roman churches do not believe in conversion but in infant baptismal regeneration and confirmation. Among the Protestants, some demand conversion as a condition of full church-membership, while others practically hold the Catholic view of infant baptismal regeneration. The entire anti-pedobaptist membership in all the world is a little over ten millions ; while those who deny any inherent spiritual benefit in the form of baptism number about eight million, practically all of whom are Baptists.

Since the latter maintain that conversion is necessary to the awakening of all the spiritual potencies that lie dormant in the infant soul ; and that the mission of the Church to the child is realized by and only by creating the conditions which are favourable to the conversion experience, it is highly desirable, therefore, that they should be able to establish upon a thoroughly scientific foundation the thesis that the expanding personality which fails of this experience is stunted in its growth and is thereby denied that which makes possible further religious development, while the growing soul which passes through this experience comes to know here and now the power of an endless life.

The establishment of this thesis leads the investigator inevitably into the field of religious psychology.

There exists in certain religious circles a prejudice against psychology. It is well to remember that this science, like every other science, is simply knowledge founded upon facts. We who are seeking the truth regarding the nature and the needs of the child may with profit turn for the time from the various interpretations of the religious status of the child given in the historic creeds and confessions to the genetic psychologists, who in greatly increasing numbers are studying the laws and principles which underlie the development of the child. Here we will find a body of painstaking, observant students who are not biased by theological presuppositions and as witnesses they at least are free from the charge of ecclesiastical partisanship.



## The Scientific Account



### III

#### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE CHILD

“**T**HE word ‘politics,’ sir,” said Mr. Pickwick to Count Smaltork, “comprises in itself a difficult study of no inconsiderable magnitude.” If Mr. Pickwick were with us, doubtless he would say the same of psychology, the shibboleth of the modern mind. Before the Supreme Court of the Final Judgment where the Athenians of the twentieth century adjudicate all questions, if you know nothing of psychology, your testimony will be dismissed as irrelevant and your argument will not be heard. But put whatever you wish to discuss into psychological terminology, for example “Visual Discriminations in Raccoons,” and the learned American Psychological Society will give to it, as they did in 1909, the closest attention. The average number of brochures, monographs, and books published in America dealing with subjects studied from the psychological view-point, vary from twenty-five hundred to thirty-three hundred every year. During the period covered by this series of lectures, at least fifty new psychological productions will have appeared. Twelve years ago, the titles of the works on psychology alone, given in Baldwin’s “Diction-

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ary of Psychology and Philosophy," books which had stood the test of science, were in number over 12,600, while more than 50,000 titles are given of publications upon subjects vitally connected with psychology. The last decade has witnessed an astounding output of books dealing with the science which undertakes to interpret mental processes; and it is a conservative estimate that an acquaintance with the whole literature would require to-day the perusal of over 100,000 volumes and a knowledge of every language in the civilized world.

### THE FIELD OF PSYCHOLOGY

The extent and variety of this body of literature grows out of the inconceivably rich and almost limitless field which the psychologist claims to be his own special province, and this is nothing less than the totality of all the conscious processes of life. Since consciousness is assured by most of them to be coextensive with life, psychology includes animal and vegetable life as well as that of man. Fechner, with the apparent approval of William James, goes further and claims for the earth consciousness, while others have endowed the atom with mind and the electron with appreciations. Eliminating these speculations, which because of the impossibility of investigation and proof cannot properly be admitted into this province of science, the vastness of the field for legitimate inquiry spreads before us; all the thoughts, the feel-

ings and the volitions of the individual man, the totality of his reactions to stimulations and of his responses to environment, beginning at birth, if not earlier, and continuing until his body lies cold in death—and this is the field of psychology, limited to one single life. Multiply this by all who are living and all who have ever lived ; add to this all that the race has experienced through action and interaction ; embrace within the field of investigation the institutions which society has reared, and the civilizations that the mind of man has created ; all history, all art, all literature, all government and all religion, and when to the experience of man and the whole human race there is added all the lower forms of life where consciousness appears, we have presented only in the barest outline the domain of that science which modestly describes itself as “being connected with the beginning and growth of mind.”

#### THE FOUNDERS OF PSYCHOLOGY

The history of psychology usually begins with Aristotle, who made the soul the principle of life. From his time until the birth of modern science, little or no advance was made in psychological principles or methods. Descartes, Hobbs, Spinoza, Locke, Berkeley, and Herbert were the forerunners of the new genetic psychology. About the middle of the nineteenth century there began two movements, one in Germany and the other in England, which later united and are now formulated in the

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science popularly known as the "New Psychology." In Germany under the leadership of Lotze, Wundt, and Fechner, experimental or psycho-physical psychology had its beginnings. A little later Herbert Spencer brought forth his "Principles of Psychology," applying to the growing mind his theory of evolution. These two modes of interpretation, the empirical and the genetic, are united in genetic psychology, a science which undertakes the study of the mind from the standpoint that the mind is a progressive movement, a succession of states, operating under the same laws of growth which are seen in all other forms of life.

### THE OLD AND THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY

Until thirty years ago, the books on psychology in this country were written by theologians and educators, both usually in the same person. Edward's "Freedom of the Will" (1754), Tappan's "Doctrine of the Will Determined by an Appeal to Consciousness" (1840), Hickok's "Rational Psychology" (1848), and "Empirical Psychology" (1854), Porter's "Human Intellect" (1868), and "Moral Science" (1885), McCosh's "Psychology" (1887) and "First Fundamental Truths" (1889), Noah K. Davis' "Elements of Psychology" (1888), indicate the type of psychology in the United States up to about 1885. These interpreters of the human mind were inspired by a religious motive. They represented the ablest scientific and religious thought of their times. Psychology was not a

popular word. These great thinkers preferred to call their discipline "Mental and Moral Philosophy." In fact, their primary interest in psychology grew out of the evidence found in human experience which tended to establish the moral universe, the existence of God, and the truthfulness of the Christian doctrines of grace. The older men here studied "mental and moral philosophy"; their sons know nothing of such studies. The men in middle life studied psychological text-books which long since have been thrown upon the literary dump-pile.

The old psychology held that the mind had faculties; memory, thought, imagination, will, etc. The new psychology knows nothing of faculties. The old psychology believed in intuitions; the new psychology throws overboard the intuitions along with Descartes' "innate ideas." For faculty, the new psychology substitutes function, and for intuition, the genetic interpretation of beliefs—the study of beliefs from the view-point of their origin and development. The primary, fundamental difference—the difference which in the history of thought distinguishes the twentieth century from all preceding time—is that the key-word to life is no longer "being," but "becoming"; that nothing can be any longer held as static and therefore described in terms of being, but that everything from the electron to the creative spirit of man must be described in terms of the dynamic, "the becoming." Man must think of himself as in process; not as "a being" but as "a becoming

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one." Modern psychology gladly says: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

Among the foremost names of those identified with the new or genetic psychology are the late William James, John Dewey, J. Mark Baldwin (under whom it was my privilege to study at Johns Hopkins), F. H. Bradley, Harold Höffding, W. Wundt, A. Binet, J. Sully, E. B. Titchener, Th. Ribot, Villa, Lombroso, E. E. Thorndike, G. Stanley Hall, and more than a score of others might with equal right be included.

These brilliant minds have scanty respect for the accepted beliefs of our fathers. In literature there is not to be found a writer who has touched upon themes of deepest interest to all mankind with a finer felicity of phrasing or with a stronger purpose seemingly to be fair, or with a tenderer sympathy for the feelings and prejudices of the others than William James; and yet the total effect of his pleasing discussions of the human soul, the presentation of the Gospel, the value of the religious experience and the principles of the rational process, is to undermine the very foundation upon which they hitherto have rested. F. H. Bradley has the following regarding the freedom of will: "The doctrine which is vulgarly termed 'free will' may in philosophy be considered obsolete, though it will continue to flourish in popular ethics. As soon as its meaning is comprehended, it loses its plausibility; but the popular moralist will always exist by not knowing what he means." John

Dewey concludes an address upon "The Future of Religion" in the following words: "So far as education is concerned, those who believe in religion as a natural expression of human experience must devote themselves to the development of the ideas of life which lie implicit in our still new science and our newer democracy. They must interest themselves in the transformation of these institutions which still bear the dogmatic and the feudal stamp (and which do not?) till they accord with these ideas. In performing this service, it is their business to do what they can to prevent all public educational agencies from being employed in ways which inevitably impede the recognition of the spiritual import of science and of democracy and hence the development of this type of religion which will be the flower of the modern spirit's achievement."<sup>1</sup>

These quotations, which are typical, I have introduced for the purpose of contrasting the attitude of the modern psychologist towards those subjects which those who immediately preceded him set themselves to defend. The modern psychologist has no bias in favour of our evangelical faith. He does not feel called upon to defend anything we hold. He is no friend of ours and any proof he may give favourable to our faith we have every reason for believing to be true.

It is the purpose of this series of lectures, by accepting the conclusions of modern psychologists

<sup>1</sup> *Hibbert Journal*.

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as they study scientifically human experience, to show that convincing proof is given in genetic psychology for the establishment of the evangelical experience as absolutely necessary to the religious progress of the individual, and that conversion, as taught in the Scriptures, is from this standpoint of science convincingly confirmed.

### THE DIVISIONS OF PSYCHOLOGY

Genetic psychology is divided into two great departments, in both of which the chief concern centres in questions of mental evolution, development and growth, and the conclusions reached are based upon the scientific treatment of psychic data. These departments are: 1. The development of the individual mind, "Child Psychology"; 2. The evolution of mind in the history of the animal series and of man treated under two headings—"Race Psychology" and "Folk Psychology." Our interest centres in the first of these. So long as writers upon psychological subjects limited their studies to the adult mind, no attention was given to the child mind, but just as soon as the adult mind came to be conceived of as a growing organism, then the interest in the genesis and the early unfoldings of the child mind took precedence over all else.

The following are some of the advantages of this study as presented by Professor Baldwin: 1. The events of the infant's consciousness are simple rather than reflective, and it is the presence of reflection in the adult mind that prevents the securing of accurate

scientific conclusions through introspection ; 2. It is by the study of children that we are able to test the truth of the analyses which we make in general psychology ; 3. It is possible to study the mental process parallel with the growth of physical structure ; 4. By beginning with the study of the child, we are able to follow the unfolding of the mind and to study the growth to maturity, and thereby we discover the laws and principles which appear throughout the whole process.

In addition to the standard works upon psychology, which because of the new view-point necessarily include child psychology, there is an extensive literature dealing wholly with this subject, while many books popular in style and based upon the theory of genetic psychology have been written during the past decade, presenting the principles of practical pedagogy. Twelve years ago Professor Chamberlain gave at the close of his notable work, "The Child," a list of books upon child study, seven hundred in number ; to-day the complete bibliography runs into thousands. Among those who have made permanent contributions to the scientific interpretations of the child mind are Preyer, Perez, Groos, Sully, Compayré, Hall, Baldwin, Angell, James, Tracy, Tanner, Chamberlain, Kirkpatrick, and King ; while Leuba, Barnes, Allen, Calkins, Coe, Pratt, Starbuck, Oppenheim and Dawson have made special studies of the religious development of the child.

The purpose of these lectures places upon me

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limitations that prevent my presenting more than barest outline of child psychology, and I regret that there is no work which I may commend as complete and entirely satisfactory. Preyer, Sully and Compayré may be read in order to become acquainted with the early literature on the subject; Baldwin's "Mental Development" is a masterly discussion of methods and principles, though technical and rather difficult reading. King's "Psychology of Child Development," and Tracy's "Psychology of Childhood," are good introductions. The only adequate treatment given as yet upon any phase of the subject is G. Stanley Hall's "Adolescence," two very large volumes which, taken in connection with his last work, two equally large volumes on "Educational Problems," gives a thorough though by no means exhaustive study of this one stage of child development.

### A BRIEF SURVEY OF CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

The view taken of the child by the genetic psychologist may be briefly indicated as follows: In the beginning, whatever consciousness the child has, to use the words of William James, is simply — "a big, blooming, buzzing confusion." Soon he begins to connect his sense impressions one with another and to show indications of memory. Both stimulation and memory are very weak. "At three months of age most children will forget a person after a few days of absence." Attention during this period is purely reflex. His movements

are, for the most part, random reactions, "due to discomfort or aimless spontaneous discharges." About the sixth month, imitation begins, soon followed by a variety of adaptations as new environmental conditions appear. The adaptation to changing circumstance is called "accommodation." It is in persistent imitation that the voluntary movements first appear. It is through persistent imitation that habit is formed; that the will is built up; that the notion of self appears and self-consciousness is actualized. From the standpoint of the psychologist, "there abideth imitation, accommodation and habit, but the greatest of these is imitation."

At the beginning of his earthly existence, the child, as he is viewed by the modern psychologist, has neither intelligence, morality nor religion. These characteristics do not exist except as future possibilities. The scientist has no interest in the doctrine of original sin, the regeneration of infants, their state of election or non-election or even their ultimate salvation. He limits his study to the psychic process that makes possible the emergence and the development of intelligence, morality and religion.

### THE PERIODS OF CHILDHOOD

In Tusser's "Five Hundred Points on Good Husbandry," published in 1557, occur the following lines:

"The first seven years bring up the child,  
The next to learn for waxing wild,  
The next keep under Sir Hobbard de Hoy,  
The next the man, no longer a boy."

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Some such division dates back into time immemorial. In modern times, the periods of childhood, presented in different scientific books, have been based upon principles such as the following: Food-getting, anatomical growth, reaction to medicine, development of senses, physical culture, social traits, recognition of law, truant traits, emotional expressions, psychological unfolding, religious appreciations, and the list is by no means complete.

One of the natural divisions is to make the material, to which life readjusts itself, the distinguishing element. Thus the growth of a plant would be divided into three parts: 1. Growth under the soil; 2. Growth in the open air, accompanied with the deepening of the roots; 3. Growth of the flower and fruit. In the first, readjustment is made primarily to the soil; in the second, to soil and air; and in the third, the successful readjustment to the first two elements gives a new direction to the activities of life, resulting in fruit-bearing. And it is to be noted in each period the characteristic activities of the former period or periods continued. Following the principle just illustrated, the growing psychic life divides itself into—1. The period of mental growth; 2. The period of moral growth; 3. The period of religious growth. Each period is marked by a distinguishing relationship to a differing psychic material.

The period of mental growth, which begins with the vague, confused consciousness of the new-born infant, attains its normal development in the power

of forming judgment. The intellect has to do wholly with relations, and the field covered by this period is described very properly as that of "Thought and Things," using the word "things" in its broadest sense. The psychic materials which the mind handles are the symbols of things.

The period of moral growth embraces a part of the preceding period and attains its normal development in the power of forming the moral judgment, but the materials to which the growing mind relates itself are fundamentally different from the preceding period. The mind is not making and interpreting the relations of "Thought and Things," but the relations of "thought and persons," the rights and duties incident to personal relationships. "Conscience," says Noah K. Davis, "is simply pure reason discerning right and wrong," or to put it in another form, "conscience is simply the mind handling and judging psychic material in which personal relations appear, involving, therefore, rights and duties."

The lamented William Newton Clark defines religion as "The life of man in his superhuman relations, that is in his relation to the Power that produced him; the Authority that is over him and the Unseen Being with whom he is capable of communion." William James, speaking as a psychologist, says: "Religion is the feeling, the acts, and the experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they may apprehend themselves to stand to whatever they may consider divine." In both

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definitions, religion is a superhuman relation ; in its lowest primitive forms, a relation to the higher powers, which invariably possess some elements of personality ; while in its highest form, religion is a personal relation between the individual man and the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, whom we call " Our Father."

In the third period, which is that of religious growth, the psychic material which the mind handles is superhuman and supra-personal in the sense that elements enter in that confessedly lie beyond human cognizance and experience.

### THE RELATION OF PSYCHOLOGY TO RELIGION

Permit me here to interject a comment which to my mind merits the thoughtful consideration of every man who is called to be an interpreter and a defender of the Christian faith. We are called to preach in an age dominated by the scientific spirit. This spirit has created new modes of thought and furnishes us a new vocabulary. It is a part of our mission, therefore, to translate the Christian message into this current scientific vernacular. This is one of the reasons which makes so difficult the work of the Christian teacher in this age. It is our duty to preserve and to defend the truths of our Christian faith both in the thought-terms of the old, and also in the terminology of the new ; but this is not all ; we are to discover in the vast domain of modern knowledge the presence of the same Christian truths, just as the chemist, analyzing specimens of

hitherto unknown compositions, brought to him from some newly-discovered land, finds the same chemical elements with which he is already familiar. Henry Drummond did this, but he limited his studies to his chosen field—that of biology—and the analogies were so complete that the title of his book, “Natural Law in the Spiritual World,” we recognize as a felicitous and scientifically accurate description of his work.

Of all the sciences, the one lying alongside Christian theology and claiming a joint ownership of Christian experience, which gives promise of the greatest discoveries, confirmatory to our Christian doctrines, is psychology. As one who in the midst of busy city pastorates has given his spare moments to this study rather than any other, I wish to affirm with all the confidence of one who is striving in the true scientific spirit to discover truth that, after repeated tests, I have confirmed the conclusions that the study of the mental processes of the human mind for the purpose of finding out the underlying laws and principles gives, as its net results, a series of propositions, each of which is capable of universal verification, which when translated into theological terms become the evangelical doctrines that we hold, with every essential doctrine present and complete.

We have uncovered buried cities, we have translated thousands of tablets, we have searched the world over for ancient manuscripts, when the strongest proof of the truthfulness of our evan-

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gelical doctrines lies buried deep in the experience of every man, known to him no more than the nervous system which makes possible his contact with the outer world. The God who made man in His own image wrought that likeness into the mental structure of man. The primary revelation of God to man is not found in nature or in the Scriptures but in man himself. A certain likeness of mind between God and man is necessary if there be any communication between them. A closer study of the psychology of man will give a truer and clearer psychology of God. We have been saying that man is somewhat like God. The time has come for us to say that God must be somewhat like man.

“ This is the glory, that, in all conceived  
Or felt or known, I recognize a Mind,  
Not mine, but like mine—for the double joy  
Making all things for me and me for Him.”

There is an imperative need for a distinctly Christian psychology ; we need men who will discover amid the idolatrous altars of Athens the true God ; who within the complexities of the psychic processes and amid the adumbrations of the subconscious life will find God working in the salvation that the soul works out. I am not unmindful of the extensive labours and the scholarly work of a considerable number of Christian men, some of them ministers and teachers in theological schools, yet they too much have limited themselves to the

description, the analysis and the explanation of religious experience, leaving out the divine activity which, through coöperation with the human, makes the experience possible. And this they have done in the desire to preserve their standing as scientists.

There are a few men, like George Jackson, in "The Fact of Conversion," Horace Emory Warner, in "The Psychology of the Christian Life," and George Steven, in "The Psychology of the Christian Soul," a book fresh from the press, who have the attitude of the true Christian psychologist; but these men are busy pastors, and outside the laboratory of the pastorate they are dependent for the materials they use, and largely the conclusions they reach, upon the work of other men.

We return to the principal discussion—the periods of growth in the life of a child. These, as we have seen, are mental, moral and religious. If the principle I have laid down in the preceding paragraph, viz., that psychological laws and evangelical doctrines are essentially the same, it is incumbent upon me to show that the processes, the underlying principles, the psychological laws which appear in the periods of mental and moral growth, shall also appear in the period of religious growth. This will have, as may be seen later, important bearing upon the subject of conversion.

#### THE MENTAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

The infant has been described as a "bundle of possibilities." During the early months, the sights

and sounds of the outer world come pouring in upon him through the different senses in blurred confusion. His nascent mind is passively receptive. "Control" is an important word in psychology. A simple definition: "Control is the checking, the limiting, the regulation of the constructive mental processes." During these early months the child's mind is under the control of the outer world, and his consciousness is the result of the action of the sensations that come pouring in from the outer world, operating upon his receptive and expanding mind. This is the first stage in the child's mental growth, which Baldwin calls "the sensory mode," because the child is wholly under the control of its sensations.

The infant mind gradually associates existing sensations with former and similar sensations, and memory emerges. The sensation coming from without calls up from within a former sensation like it or somewhat akin to it. The control is thus both outer and inner. To this stage, naturally, is given the name "the memory mode."

The child, learning to distinguish persons and things, acquiring self-consciousness, developing the art of speaking rapidly, increases his mental activities, and by persistent imitation comes to reproduce in his inner world a copy of the world about him. He discovers also that he can manipulate his own inner experience. He can "make-believe" his stick to be a horse and he enjoys the pleasure of riding. He converts the same stick into

a gun, and he becomes a soldier. We call this play. Psychologically viewed, it is a phase in the development of will—the action of the young mind leading to the inner control of its own experience. During this period the activities of the mind are capricious, unregulated, often extravagant and full of “make-believe.” In play the child is a law unto himself. The control is wholly inner. The third stage in the growth of intelligence is called “the play mode.” Christian Science, by the way, is simply a reversion to the play mode and represents what we readily grant, a mental life that antedates the appearance of intelligence.

Between the experiences in play and the experiences in real life, the child soon recognizes a fundamental difference. His parents and elders live in a real world, and he comes to feel the insubstantial character of his “make-believe” world. He begins to ask questions. He discerns the superior value of the knowledge which those who are older have, and he *voluntarily transfers to them the control of his mental life*. He becomes a student. He is a seeker after knowledge. He becomes an intelligent being rightly related to his intellectual environment. All the future is simply an enriching, an enlarging of this rightly related mental life. He is now prepared to receive all the knowledge which may be communicated to him. Intellectually he is “saved” through *the voluntary transfer of the control of his mental life* to those about him whom he judges to be wiser than himself. And this choice

is made for life and dominates him all the years that follow. We thus reach the concluding stage in the development of the child as an intelligent being.

This personal choice, this voluntary transfer of control, is absolutely necessary to intelligence, and marks the beginning of the child's full participation in the thought-life about him. An imbecile never succeeds in making the voluntary transfer of control to the intellectual environment represented in the wiser minds about him, and from the standpoint of intelligence he is hopelessly lost. However, it is well-nigh impossible to locate the time when the transfer of control takes place. The moment is submerged in the vast experience that lies buried in the subconscious life. Though none of us can recall such an experience, and no doubt those who cared for us cannot tell the hour, yet they would testify that there was a time when such a relation did not exist, and that later such a relation did exist, and therefore, some time in the interval, the change took place. As Bishop McTyeire used to say about his conversion: "I cannot tell when or where I was converted, but I know it took place during a certain year and within a certain forty-acre lot."

Yet there are individual instances where this experience is postponed and we are able to study the awakening which marks the development of all the powers and the adjustment of all the relations necessary to intelligence. No better illustration

can be found than that in the life of Helen Keller, who was cut off at the age of eighteen months from the cheerful ways of men by the loss of sight and hearing. Her mental life lay imprisoned until she was nearly seven years of age. "For weeks Miss Sullivan, her teacher, who opened the doors of light to this poor darkened soul, had been spelling words into her hand which Helen had repeated and associated with objects; but she had not grasped the idea of language in general, the fact that everything had a name, and that through names she should share her own experiences with others and learn theirs—the idea that there is fellowship in thought.

"‘This morning,’ writes her teacher, ‘while she was washing she wanted to know the name for water. I spelled w-a-t-e-r and thought no more about it until after breakfast, then it occurred to me that with the help of this new word I might succeed in straightening out the “mug-milk” difficulty (a confusion of ideas previously discussed). We went out into the pump-house and I made Helen hold her mug under the pump while I pumped. As the cold water gushed forth filling the mug, I spelled w-a-t-e-r in Helen’s free hand. The word coming so close upon the sensation of cold water rushing over her hand seemed to startle her. She dropped the mug and stood as one transfixed. A new light came into her face. She spelled “water” several times. Then she dropped on the ground and asked for its name, and pointed to the pump and trellis,

and suddenly turning round she asked for my name. I spelled "teacher." Just then the nurse brought Helen's little sister into the pump house and Helen spelled "baby" and pointed to the nurse. All the way back to the house she was highly excited, and learned the name of every object she touched, so that in a few hours she added thirty new words to her vocabulary.'

"The following day Miss Sullivan writes: 'Helen got up this morning like a radiant fairy. She has flitted from object to object asking the name of everything and kissing me for very gladness.' And four days later, 'Everything must have a name. . . . She drops the signs and pantomime she used before as soon as she has words to supply their place, and the acquirement of a new word affords her the liveliest pleasure. And we notice that her face grows more expressive each day.'"<sup>1</sup> In this experience Hellen Keller transfers to her teacher the control of her own thought-world, and through this transfer enters upon a career of participation in the knowledge which mankind has gathered.

The phrase, "*the voluntary transfer of control*," described only part of this transforming experience in the life of Helen Keller. The fact is, we are more impressed by its suddenness, together with the joyfulness of the little dumb, blind child as she makes the wonderful discovery. There arose before her consciousness as something which might

<sup>1</sup> Cooley: "Social Organization," p. 63.

be true, that words were means of communication and made possible fellowship in thought—(of course, we cannot think of Helen as then using these terms)—and suddenly she realizes that the assumption is valid and true. Some would say that she “surrendered,” and the word is widely used to describe the same type of inward change occurring in the field of religion.

George Steven in “The Psychology of the Christian Soul,” the most notable book upon religious experience written during the past decade, says, in speaking of conversion, and his words apply with equal force to intellectual salvation which we are now discussing, “the word ‘surrender’ does not hit the experience. We do not surrender to a beautiful landscape, it captures us. The shepherds of Bethlehem did not choose the vision or the Gloria. They were rapt, laid hold of, lifted out of themselves. The hearing and the sight were theirs; and from these they could have turned away. This was their part, to reject or to receive. They neither brought the visitation nor added to it when it came; theirs only to see it and to hear it and to enter into its joy. The great moment came and their whole heart leapt out in response.”<sup>1</sup> But whatever phrasing we use, the mind is so to speak fertilized, a new aspect of mental life begins and the child is started upon a career in which he will be able to make his own the knowledge which the race has slowly gathered.

<sup>1</sup> Steven : “The Psychology of the Christian Soul,” p. 260.

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### THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

In the development of his moral life, the growing child passes through the same stages which characterize the unfolding of his intellectual life. There is a period when he is neither moral nor immoral but is simply unmoral. He has neither the knowledge of right and wrong, nor the ability of acquiring immediately that power. The commands which are given to older children and awaken in them an ethical response are simply to him commands and nothing more. The mother tells him what he shall do, but his failure to do it does not carry with it any blameworthiness; he is living in the period of "the moral sensory mode"; the stage when all authority is without and all the commands and the prohibitions given the child impose on him no moral obligation.

As he grows older he naturally links together the commands and prohibitions which have been repeatedly given him. If the breaking of these commands has been followed by some physical punishment, and he associates punishment with the violation of the command, his obedience may in a large measure be due to fear. He has an instinctive desire to get on the best he can with the people with whom he must live, father, mother, and older brothers and sisters, and along with this, there is a growing craving to get what he wants when he wants it. This period may properly be called the "moral memory mode."

During this time many of the acts of the child,

commonly assumed moral, now are held to be largely, if not wholly, lacking in the moral element. To such belong children's lies, their cruelty and their tendency to destroy whatever comes within their reach. The third period, "the play mode," in the moral development of the child, is characterized by a growing willfulness and arbitrariness. The power of discrimination between right and wrong has come into existence, and the child distinguishes clearly and knows what he ought to do and what he ought not to do. He takes evident satisfaction in doing wrong; he sometimes runs away; he does many things on the sly, and with the violations of these now moral laws, there comes a clearer knowledge of the difference between right and wrong, and the growing feeling of the shame and guilt which sin brings with it. The time covered by this stage of development differs in different children; some have it as early as at four years and others at seven or later.

This power of discriminating between right and wrong, which we call conscience, manifests itself in the consciousness of the child with increasing force. He may willfully break the laws of the social world in which he lives, but the badness or the naughtiness grows out of the child's being thoroughly aware that he wills to be bad or she wills to be naughty. It is the assertion of the authority of one's own will over against the will of the moral order represented in those about the child. It is a bold defiant hostility of the moral principles that govern

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the lives of the child's elders. All children do not deserve to be called bad, but there never has been a child born of human parents who in every moral situation has voluntarily chosen the right course. The experience of the growing personality in which the capricious will of the expanding mind is made in life the source of authority is a universal human experience, and it makes no difference what you may think about total depravity or original sin, every child who reaches this stage of development becomes a sinner. Sinning is coextensive with the moral unfolding of personality, and the self-asserting of the child-will over against the social will and against his own conscience is a universal experience.

The experience of the growing child runs parallel with the tragedy of Eden. The entrance of law brings with it the possibility of its violation, and the attractiveness of the fruit and the promise of personal benefits lead to its eating, and with the eating comes the awakening of the vital difference between good and evil, accompanied with the sense of guilt and the feeling of shame. Adam and Eve lost innocence, moral ignorance and the Garden of Eden; they gained the sense of guilt, the knowledge of good and evil and the struggle with the wilderness. The little child living in the garden of infancy is innocent and ignorant, safe in the shelter of the garden of a mother's love, but with the emergence of law and the realization of the power of his own will and the seeming attractiveness of

wrong-doing, the little child, like his first parents, loses his innocence and his ignorance of moral values and is thrust out into the struggle of life, conscious of his having become a sinner.

This is not the final stage in the moral development of the child ; there comes to him the realization of the wrongfulness of wrong-doing, and he tries to be good, tries to do what others teach him to be right ; tries to form good habits and to obey the moral law, and this attitude is a moral change. It is nothing more nor less than the voluntary transfer of control of his decisions to the moral law under which those about him also live. He recognizes the obligation to keep these laws, and he freely and without compulsion, simply because it is right, endeavours to keep the laws. Conscience becomes for him the moral authority governing his acts. One of the chief difficulties in moral education is creating this attitude towards the moral law. Some parents and teachers use different modes of punishment ; pain is certainly the world's primary teacher. Others use persuasion, and try to make right-doing attractive. It is not my purpose to contrast these, for both are necessary, but the goal should never be forgotten—the awakening of the child to that willingness which will lead him *to transfer voluntarily the control of his life to the moral law*, as he personally interprets it.

One of my friends has a little girl, who at the time of this incident was about six years of age. She came into the sitting-room one morning with

her work-basket and began sewing. The mother said to her: "Edith, do you know what day this is?" The little girl said: "Yes, Mother, it is Sunday." Then the mother said, "Edith, do you know that Mother thinks it is wrong to sew on Sunday?" And Edith replied, "Yes, Mother, I know that you think that way." The mother said, "Well, you know that Mother never sews on Sunday because it is wrong." Edith answered, "Yes, Mother, I know that is the way you think about it." Mrs. Wilson remained silent, and a little later Edith taking up her basket goes to her room and returns without her sewing. "I see you haven't your sewing with you, Edith," said the wise and patient mother. "No, Mother," Edith answered, "it is Sunday." In this incident the child voluntarily transfers her decision to the moral law which the mother recognized, and in doing so strengthened by her choice all of the moral forces that enter into her life. And the result was far better than if the mother had compelled her by punishment or persuasion.

The goal of the moral development of any personality is the inscribing of the moral law upon the tablets of the heart, or to use the phrase of Philo, "to so train the child that he shall bear the image of the law in the soul." We may place before the child the copy of the law, or put into his hands the stamp which imprints the image of the law, and God may move upon the growing mind of the child through the Holy Spirit; yet no hand can inscribe

the law or imprint its image other than the hand of the child himself. Here appears the growing personality crowned with the regal moral power. Life's business has begun and the child enters upon his Kingdom—the ruling of his own spirit.

### THE RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

We come now to the third state—the distinctly religious stage. The beginning of the child's religious life depends upon his environment. The receptivity of the child makes it possible to impart to him "the forms of any religion." The knowledge of religion comes first by communication. The little child accepts as true whatever is told him. His religious ideas are "controlled" by the acts and utterances of those about him. This first stage is followed rapidly by the second, when the child endeavours, through memory, to link up and harmonize all that he has learned from various sources. Those two stages cover approximately the time from the child's earliest instruction to the early primary grades.

In the first stage, the mental, of the child's unfolding, there arose the dualism of "the self and the not-self," and the psychic material which the child handled were thoughts recognized as the symbols of things. In the second period, the moral, a new psychic material appears—persons—and the effort which he made was to adjust his thinking so as to understand the rights of these persons and to fulfill his duties towards them. In the third and ✓

final stage, the religious, of his development, he is seeking to unify all experience. God looms before him, everywhere present and always requiring that he shall do right. God, so he is taught, is the source of all; the Maker of heaven and earth; the Giver of the moral law. To go against his conscience is to go against God's will, and the child discovers that he can raise his puny hand against God. Wrong-doing has a new meaning; it is defiance of God. He perhaps does not want to go to Sunday-school; he perhaps does not want to say his prayers; he takes delight in running risks, though he realizes that in so doing he merits the displeasure of God. He has a thrilling sense of peril; often he runs away from home or plays truant at school; he becomes a little vandal and leads the gang in acts of violence. He, in the early experience of "play," asserted his own will and ruled autocratically his make-believe world. In sinning, he asserts his own will against God's will, and attempts to rule his moral world in rebellion against God. His course of conduct is capricious and lawless; he becomes a sinner,—and does so by his own deliberate deed, and not merely because of his inherited tendencies, although these are not lacking in power.

Yet this does not take place without certain mental and bodily affections. The sense of sin, the feeling of estrangement from God, the fear of early death and going to "the bad place," depression concealed by assumed gaiety, secret prayers, all indicate the intensifying of the inner struggle. Jesus

Christ has been represented to him as the rightful Lord of his life and the magnetism of the Master takes hold of his life. The Spirit of God takes the things of God and reveals them to this growing child. He stands upon the threshold of the greatest experience in the human life. Jesus Christ appears as the One sent of God, to whom he should yield the full allegiance of his life. He becomes also fearful of the consequences of his sins and the things he loved to do grow hateful. A new feeling of need arises, and his heart is deeply moved. Then the great moment when *he transfers voluntarily to Jesus Christ the control of his life* and says, "I'll go where you want me to; I'll be what you want me to be." He enters into a new relation with God.

Through regeneration there is produced a complete readjustment of the subconscious life, and this transformation is manifested in the field of consciousness, through intellect, affection and will; the intellect recognizes God in Christ as the divine Teacher; the heart recognizes Him as the object of supreme affection, and the will, captured by God, finds its expression in joyful obedience, the permanent persistent effort to reproduce Christ-like conduct. Thus the child comes into right relation to God. He is now in the Kingdom; he is ready for church-membership, along with the other believers in Christ. The goal of the whole movement of his psychic development is now reached, and from this time forth, life means for him an

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extension and an enrichment of a living personal fellowship with God.

This is conversion viewed from the psychological side. In character, I have endeavoured to show its correspondence with and similarity to the earlier crises which marked, respectively, the beginning of the intellectual and the moral life. Religious conversion is scientific and moral. An imbecile never succeeds in making the voluntary transfer of control to the intellectual environment presented by the wiser minds about him, and from the standpoint of intelligence he is hopelessly lost. A degenerate never succeeds in making the voluntary transfer of control to the moral law embodied in the moral standards of those about him, and from the moral standpoint he is hopelessly lost. An intelligent moral being, though he be only a child, who does not voluntarily transfer the control of his life to God as revealed to him in Jesus Christ, is lost; but if he makes the transfer of control, he is saved, because he has entered into the life of fellowship with God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

## IV

### THE SCIENCE OF CONVERSION

WE are living in the age of the optative mood. Modern science created "the age of doubt," but even the scientists are passing into the optative mood, out of doubt into wistful yearning and hope. A refreshing modesty and a becoming humility now characterize them and in a new and reverential spirit they are endeavouring to understand and to interpret religious phenomena. A strange calm pervades the world of thought; and scientist and modernist, higher critic and creed-defender, agnostic and heresy-hunter have felt the spell of the new mood. The fires of controversy no longer blaze and the hot words of disputants are dying into silence. This is not however an era of peace but of passivity. We need a great issue, great enough to challenge every intellect and to drive every thinker into the arena to fight to the death.

Christianity, all agree, is the religion of redemption. Deliverance from sin is its distinguishing characteristic, but an age-long disagreement has existed regarding the methods by which this salvation is secured. The Greek, the Roman and, in some degree, the Anglican churches affirm that it

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is secured through the sacraments ; the Evangelical churches affirm that it is secured through the personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord ; the one salvation through forms, and the other salvation through faith. Valid forms require a properly authorized clergy ; valid faith requires a properly authorized message. The one centres authority in the Church ; the other, in the Bible. The one bears the name of Catholicism, and the other Evangelicalism. Each is undertaking to interpret Christianity to the modern man and to meet the demands of modern civilization.

We stand upon the threshold of a new era in the history of the Christian religion. Only two epochs have approached in importance the one upon which we are about to enter, the Apostolic Age, and the Reformation. The enthusiasm of the Apostolic Age grew out of the revelation of God through Jesus Christ and the disciples of Jesus who had seen Him and heard Him went everywhere telling the things which they had seen and heard. Before the New Testament canon was completed, the message of the Gospel had been borne far and wide and in every great centre of population within the Roman Empire there were communities of believers who had experienced in the transformation of their natures the beneficent effects of the Gospel.

The Reformation grew out of the rediscovery of the revelation of God made through the inspired writers of the Bible, and the realization that every man had the right of access to God through faith

in Jesus broke the shackles of ecclesiastical tyranny from the souls of thousands and reëstablished the evangelical faith in the hearts of men. In the Apostolic Age, it was the proof of God's presence and power in one unique personality that fired the hearts of men with a triumphant faith. In the Reformation, it was the proof of God's presence and power in that incomparable literature we call the Bible that brought freedom and peace and joy to the long enslaved. The time has not arrived when with certainty any one can announce the revelation of God which will stir our hearts with an enthusiasm like that of the Reformation or the Apostolic Age. But the signs of the times indicate that the revelation may be in the scientific proof of the presence and the power of God revealed in Christian experience.

#### THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

"Christianity," wrote Henry Drummond a quarter of a century ago, "is learning from science to go back to its facts. There is, however, one portion of this field of facts which is still strangely neglected and to which a scientific theology may turn its next attention. The evidence of Christianity is not the Evidences. The evidence for Christianity is *a Christian*. The unit of physics is the atom, of biology the cell, of philosophy the man, of theology the Christian. The natural man, his regeneration by the Holy Spirit, the spiritual man and his re-

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lations to the world and to God, these are the modern facts for a scientific theology. We may indeed talk with science on its own terms about the creation of the world and the spirituality of nature and the force behind nature, and the unseen universe; but our language is not less scientific, not less justified by facts when we speak of the work of the risen Christ and the contemporary activities of the Holy Ghost, and the facts of regeneration and the powers which are freeing men from sin. This is a great experience which is repeated every day, the evidence of which is as accessible as for any fact of science; its phenomena are as palpable as any in nature; its processes are as explicable or as inexplicable; its purpose is as clear; and yet science has never been seriously asked to reckon with it; nor has theology ever granted it the place its impressive reality commands. One aim of scientific theology will be to study conversion and restore to Christianity its most powerful witness.”<sup>1</sup>

This appeal was ignored by the students of theology, although they gave considerable attention to Drummond’s valuable and suggestive work, “Natural Law in the Spiritual World.” Ten years passed before any scientist undertook the investigation of the facts of religious experience. In 1895 G. Stanley Hall, the foremost child-psychologist of the world, delivered an address upon the subject, and the following year, Professor Leuba of Bryn Mawr published an article in the *American Journal*

<sup>1</sup> Jackson : “The Fact of Conversion,” p. 1.

*of Psychology*, upon "The Psychology of the Religious Phenomena." To Prof. E. D. Starbuck must be given the credit of making the first sympathetic, scientific investigation of the religious experience. His work, entitled "The Psychology of Religion," appearing in 1899, was followed the succeeding year by Prof. G. A. Coe's "Spiritual Life," written in like spirit and introducing new phases of the Christian experience. In 1902 Prof. William James issued his monumental work, "Varieties of Religious Experience," which has been described as "the most scientific book on the phenomena of the religious consciousness which has ever been published." The literature produced during the last decade has been rich, extensive and varied. Every month adds new volumes to the growing library.

The facts of the inner life are now fully recognized as the most indubitable of facts. To the investigator inspired by the true scientific spirit all facts are sacred and "before the fact of conversion, as before any other, he will sit down 'as a little child.'" "The contemporary activities of the Holy Ghost," to use Drummond's felicitous phrase, are being sympathetically, reverently and scientifically studied. However, many devout persons have felt disturbed because of this effort to interpret the mysterious processes of conversion and to discover the spiritual laws of the soul's awakening. In response to this feeling, Professor Coe then states the position of the Christian psychologists: "Em-

pirical methods do not reduce the facts of the religious life to the plain of the natural as contrasted with the supernatural. Every question arising in the psychology of religious experience may be understood in this way: Under what circumstances does the Divine Spirit work such or such a change in the minds of men? That the Holy Spirit does observe antecedents and wait for conditions to ripen; that He does not vouchsafe the same blessings to all individuals or to all ages of life; and that we have it in our power either to prepare the way for His revelations or to hinder them—all this is current among Christians. Now these are the very uniformities that need investigation.”<sup>1</sup> As there are natural laws in the world of nature, so there are psychic laws in the world of mind; and in that domain of mind which we call the religious experience there are laws operating in perfect harmony with all other psychic laws. God, in the field of religion, as He is everywhere, is the God of order and law. This is the spirit which dominates a group none too large among modern psychologists.

#### THE GROUNDS FOR DISTRUST

If all students, investigating the religious experience, possessed this spirit, there would be little need to fear the results of their labours. But some of the scientists are confessedly not Christian men while others who are, seem more concerned in

<sup>1</sup> Coe: “The Spiritual Life,” p. 17.

establishing their scientific standing as students who describe, analyze and synthesize psychic facts, than they are to furnish proof of "the contemporary activities of the Holy Ghost" to hesitating and skeptical minds. The university atmosphere pervades their work. They are observant spectators rather than active participants in the endeavour to discover new evidence of the verity of the Christian faith. They have the spirit of Erasmus rather than that of Luther.

There are therefore earnest Christian minds who view with no little concern the work of such psychologists in the field of religion, and their attitude is not unreasonable or surprising. Lord Morley, more than forty years ago, described in his notable work on "Compromise" the position which some of these scientists apparently assume. He says: "The modern free thinker does not attack it (the Christian religion) but he explains it by referring it to the better and not to the worst part of human nature. He traces it to man's craving for a higher morality. He finds its source in their aspirations after noble expression of that feeling for incommensurable things which is in truth under so many varieties of inwoven pattern the common universal web of religious faith."<sup>1</sup> This is exactly what is taking place, and many of the devout Christians who have followed the works of the religious psychologists during the past decade are standing like Mary before the empty tomb, crying, "They have

<sup>1</sup> Morley: "Compromise," p. 150.

taken away my Lord." The supernatural has been entirely ignored and a theory has been sought for to explain the facts wholly upon natural grounds. The religious consciousness is defined as "a valuating attitude towards something real or imagined." Harold Höffding, the great Danish philosopher, describes religion as "the conservation of values." Irving King, in his book "The Development of Religion," finds the beginning of primitive religion to be in whatever the group or clan held to be of such worth as they together sought to impart these valued conceptions to succeeding generations.

All of these writers, and they are numerous, agree in making the social consciousness the basis of religion, and thus religion becomes but a chapter in the science of sociology. Baldwin insists that religion arises out of the ethical sentiment, and "that its social value is mainly on the side of its conservative influence, and that the ethical is the most important as well as the most rational of all the springs of human action."<sup>1</sup> Professor Ames, of Chicago University, says in "The Psychology of Religious Experience," "Religion is rather an experience of groups of individuals, resulting from their collective and coöperative effort to secure and to preserve the ideals which appeal to them as possessing the greatest value."

This interpretation of the psychology of religion declares that the infant is non-religious, non-moral and non-personal; he does not possess a religious

<sup>1</sup> "Social and Ethical Interpretations," p. 451.

consciousness any more than he possesses in infancy an art consciousness, but he does possess a social tendency out of which religion should naturally arise. Adolescence, sex development and religious experience, so they say, are all closely related. Conversions at this period, and especially in those churches where such an experience is anticipated, are to be expected. It is a part of the child's social awakening, and due largely to suggestion. The conclusion, as stated by Professor Ames, is that "In religion, as in medicine, it becomes increasingly apparent that the great need is prevention through moral activity and development, and, therefore, 'Salvation by Education' rather than by conversion."<sup>1</sup>

#### THE PSYCHOLOGISTS' ACCOUNT OF CONVERSION

To all this what has psychology, and I mean scientific psychology—not religiously speculative psychology—to say? Does psychology teach that the religious experience can be explained wholly upon natural grounds? No, the denial of the existence of the supernatural is just as unscientific as its affirmation—for the field of the scientist is to describe the processes, the phenomena, to relate them intelligently and to discover their underlying laws. The dogmatism of the modern scientist outside of his own proper field is a greater danger to the progress of truth in our times than all the foes that ignorance can marshal.

As a psychologist, he is interested only in the

<sup>1</sup> "The Psychology of Religious Experience," p. 279.

processes which mark the child's development, and the phenomena of conversion concern him only because they are psychic facts. Starbuck finds in conversion two aspects: "1. The person emerges from the smaller world of limited existence into a larger world of being; 2. Conversion is the surrender of the person's will to be guided by the larger forces of which it is a part."<sup>1</sup> William James says: "To be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain assurance, are so many phrases which denote processes gradual or sudden by which a self, hitherto divided, consciously wrong, inferior and unhappy, becomes unified and conscientiously right, superior and happy in consequence of its former hold upon religious realities."<sup>2</sup> G. Stanley Hall says: "Conversion is a natural, normal, universal and necessary process at the stage when life pivots over from an autocentric to a heterocentric basis. A pivotal point is somehow discernible where the ego yields to the alter. Religion has no other function than to make this change complete, and the whole of morality may be well defined as life in the interest of the race, for the love of God and the love of man are one and inseparable."<sup>3</sup>

Let us review these definitions: Starbuck's description is in harmony with the evangelical account; conversion, as defined by William James,

<sup>1</sup> "The Psychology of Religion," p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> "Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 189.

<sup>3</sup> "Adolescence," p. 304.

includes a great variety of experiences, each of which is marked by the rearing of a new centre of control accompanied by a certain feeling of peace and satisfaction ; G. Stanley Hall makes conversion a universal experience, resulting in the higher social self. In the first, the effort is to deal fairly with the effect of accepting the Gospel of Jesus Christ ; in the second, the effort is to furnish a definition which describes the greatest variety of change within the human personality, while the effort of the third is to give a definition in which evangelical conversion becomes merely one division under the head of adolescent change. Conversion, as viewed by psychologists generally, is a change taking place within the life of the individual in which there is a reorganization of feelings and purposes about a new and higher centre. This centre may be either social or religious. The change may take place suddenly or gradually.

An illustration of a conversion, distinctively social and patriotic in character, is given in Southey's "Life of Lord Nelson." Returning home from India, broken in health and so depressed in spirit that he would have gladly welcomed death, young Nelson had an experience which completely transformed his life. It made him a patriot. The change was marked by the rearing in his thought of a new controlling centre, marked by loyalty and devotion to his king and to his country.

"Long afterwards," Southey says, "when the name of Nelson was known as widely as that of

England itself, he spoke of the feelings which he had at this time endured. 'I felt impressed,' said he, 'with a feeling that I should never rise in my profession. My mind was staggered with a view of the difficulties I had to surmount, and the little interest I possessed. I could discover no means of reaching the object of my ambition. After a long and gloomy reverie, in which I almost wished myself overboard, a sudden glow of patriotism was kindled within me and presented my king and country as my patron. "Well then," I exclaimed, "I will be a hero and, confiding in Providence, brave every danger."' "

"Long afterwards, Nelson loved to speak of the feeling of that moment; and from that time he often said a radiant orb was suspended in his mind's eye, which urged him onward to renown. The state of mind in which these feelings began is what the mystics mean by their season of darkness and desertion. If the animal spirits fail, they represent it as an actual temptation. The enthusiasm of Nelson's nature had taken a different direction, but its essence was the same. He knew to what the previous state of dejection was to be attributed; that an enfeebled body and a mind depressed had cast this shade over his soul; but he always seemed willing to believe that the sunshine which succeeded bore with it a prophetic glory, and that the light which led him on was 'light from heaven.' "

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Nelson," pp. 15-16.

## THE LAWS OF CONVERSION

Students of conversion agree that while the experience may occur at any point in life after the emergence of intelligence and moral insight, the adolescent period extending from ten years to the age of twenty-four or twenty-five is the normal conversion period. Within this period there are years when the experience is most frequent. Starbuck says, after a careful study of thousands of conversions, that "among the females there are two tidal waves of religious awakening at about thirteen and sixteen followed by a less significant period at eighteen; while among the males the great wave is at about sixteen preceded by a wavellet at twelve and followed by a surging up at eighteen or nineteen." "There is a normal period somewhere between the innocence of childhood and the fixed habits of maturity while the person is yet impressionable and has already capacity for the spiritual insight, when conversions most frequently occur." "The first two rises in the curves of conversion seen from the psychological standpoint correspond to the decline of the sensory elements in consciousness and the birth of rational insight."

Science recognizes the instantaneous character of conversion: yet there are many, unable to fix the time or the place, whose consecrated lives give abundant proof of their fidelity to Christ. Their failure to recall the experience does not prove that conversion has not actually taken place. The discovery of the subconscious life and the importance

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of these changes which occur below the field of consciousness takes from those who deny the necessity of conversion their strongest argument. It must be admitted, however, that the data of science regarding subconscious change is as yet insufficient to affirm that all who give evidence of Christian character have actually passed through the experience of conversion at a level below consciousness. But the fact that all Christians sustain to Jesus Christ similar relations and that these relations are voluntarily preserved, presents common sequences which can be rationally accounted for only by a common antecedent experience. Further there is a growing tendency on the part of psychologists to depreciate the testimony of consciousness. G. Stanley Hall says: "Consciousness is a very poor witness to what takes place in the abysses of soul life. The remembered experiences of individuals are pitifully fragmentary and puerile and often absurdly mistaken as to cause, process, issue and object."<sup>1</sup> Science is not ready to take the dogmatic position of some modern theologians regarding the nature of the child and the abnormality of conversion, but prefers the attitude of the suspended judgment regarding the universal necessity of Christian conversion.

The suddenness and the transforming characteristic of conversion are facts which have compelled the attention and investigation of science. Professor Romanes, in his "Thoughts on Religion," says:

<sup>1</sup> "Adolescence," p. 341.

“Saint Augustine after thirty years of age and other fathers bear testimony to a sudden, enduring and extraordinary change in themselves called *conversion*. Now this experience has been repeated and testified to by countless millions of civilized men and women in all nations and all degrees of culture. . . . In all cases, it is not a mere change of belief or opinion; this is by no means the point; the point is that it is a modification of character more or less profound.”<sup>1</sup> Professor James, after presenting many illustrations, says: “Were we writing the story of the mind from the purely natural-history point of view, with no religious interest whatever, we would still have to write down man’s liability to sudden and complete conversion as one of his most curious peculiarities.”<sup>2</sup>

The fact of conversion is established. The conditions of adolescent life contribute to the experience. The greater number of conversions are sudden though they are preceded by a period of preparation leading up to the crisis in which the whole personality participates, resulting in a new and permanent relationship being established with God through faith in Jesus Christ. The memory of the experience is sometimes forgotten and conversions of this type may be described as unconscious. Every conversion differs from every other conversion. Science is unable either by observation

<sup>1</sup> “Thoughts on Religion,” p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> “Varieties of Religious Experience,” p. 230.

or introspection to discover all the facts which enter into the experience and therefore in sifting and analyzing the phenomena of conversion the scientist does not deny or affirm the presence of the Holy Spirit in bringing about the change whose reality no one is more ready to assert.

### THE HEALTHY-MINDED OR THE BLIND

Prof. William James, in his notable work, "Varieties of Religious Experience," contrasts "the religion of the healthy-mindedness" with the religion of "the sick soul," the choice of terms implying that the former possessed a saner, healthier religion than the latter. According to Professor James, sick souls need conversion; the healthy-minded do not. Walt Whitman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Edward Everett Hale, the exponents of Christian Science and New Thought, are put forth as representatives of the religion of the healthy-minded. Yet Professor James is compelled to admit that "systematic healthy-mindedness, conceiving good as the essential and universal aspect of being, deliberately excludes evil from its field of vision. . . . In the first place, happiness, like every other emotional state, has blindness and insensibility to opposing facts given it as its instinctive weapon for self-protection against disturbance."<sup>1</sup> The so-called healthy-minded in ignoring evil seems "perversely to shut his eyes to it and hush it up." Professor James states that "the hushing of it up may, in a perfectly candid

<sup>1</sup> "Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 88.

and honest mind, grow into a deliberate religious policy."

Healthy-mindedness is a reversion to "the play mode" of the child's development—a mode which preceded the appearance of judgment and intelligence. The healthy-minded willfully refuse to look upon the sadder aspects of life and then dogmatically declare that these aspects do not exist. And like little children in organized play, the healthy-minded return to the happy period of childhood when a new and brilliant world created by a lively fancy rivalled the world on which the bodily eye looked out before reflection had begun "to draw a hard dividing line between the domain of historical truth and fiction." Healthy-mindedness is the repudiation of the adult experience in order to enjoy the illusions of the child's experience. In so doing many desirable hedonistic ends are secured but they rest upon a willful blindness to facts. Mental moods influence thought, action, health and social attitudes. A mood founded upon the disbelief in matter, disease, sin and death makes for complacency and cheerfulness and contributes in many directions to gratifying feelings. The healthy-minded are trying to enter heaven reclining upon "flowery beds of ease."

The leading divisions of "the religion of healthy-mindedness" are these: 1. Those who affirm the non-existence of sin; 2. Those who affirm the abnormality of conversion, and 3. Those who deny the necessity of the conversion-experience in the de-

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velopment of the child. The first, upon certain philosophical assumptions, inconsistently maintained, define the consciousness of sin as a phase of "mortal error," sin being destroyed by the refusal to recognize its existence; the second, upon certain theological assumptions regarding the universal fatherhood of God and the consequent divinity of man, deny the necessity of conversion and deplore its appearance; the third, upon a psychological inference as to the inherent character of the infant mind and a theological inference as to the universal benefits of the atonement, while admitting the necessity of conversion for all who fall into sin, insist that the child is in the Kingdom at birth and should grow up a Christian and never know himself to be otherwise. The latter naturally emphasize "salvation through education."

### CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

The first division of the "healthy-minded" are the Christian Scientists of whom none live consistently with their philosophy. Denying the existence of matter, they eat, drink, wear clothes, bathe, live in houses, are notably successful in acquiring and handling money, have diseases and die, and when they die are buried in caskets and have monuments reared above their earthly graves. In all the ordinary relations of life they react to the material world as if they never thought of denying its existence, and when they think that they are not receiving proper material returns, they do not hesi-

tate to invoke the aid of the courts. They are simply "playing" that "matter is nothing." Equally true are they playing, engaging in naïve, childish "make-believe" when they manipulate their mental world and focus their attention upon thoughts, willfully blind to their truthfulness and seek to evoke the pleasurable emotions and the feeling of satisfaction which these thoughts can arouse. In a tense and nervous age which seeks above all else personal comfort, Christian Science by giving a religious interpretation to the denial of all the agencies which produce mental, moral and spiritual suffering has furnished a diversion for those victims of imaginary or real ills by teaching the way by which they may return to a make-believe world where they reproduce the mental plane of the five-year-old child. At such a level, which antedates in the individual the appearance of both intelligence and morality, it is impossible for them to grasp the meaning of truth or to respond to an ethical appeal. Christian Science is incompetent to speak upon the existence or non-existence of sin. All the exponents of this cult can say is: "We pretend that sin does not exist."

The "healthy-minded" Christian Scientists are spiritually stunted and perversely blind to the universality and the exceeding sinfulness of sin. They are the defectives of the spiritual world, easily hypnotized by the suggestion that sin possesses no reality, insensible alike to the pain of remorse and to the shame of guilt. And until they are convicted of sin and awakened to the

sense of personal need, conversion is for them an impossible experience. "No deeper cleft," says Miss Wedgewood in "The Moral Ideal," "divides human spirits than that which separates the faith possible to men for whom evil is a mere negation, a mere shadow, a form of ignorance—from that which regards it as a real antagonist to every form of God." <sup>1</sup>

#### CONVERSION REGARDED AS ABNORMAL

One of the popular doctrines of to-day is the universal fatherhood of God, which assumes that all men are children of God, it matters not what may be their moral character or their self-determined attitude towards God. The duty of parents and Christian teachers is simply to impart to the child the knowledge of God's relation to him and to urge him to recognize God as his Father. The peculiar danger of the teaching is the tendency to make the religious experience dependent solely upon the intellectual assent to the doctrine of the fatherhood of God. Nearly all who hold the doctrine are Universalists in some form or another. The doctrine emasculates the Atonement and weakens the moral appeal of the Gospel. The trend lies in the direction of the denial of the essentials of conversion as we conceive of it, viz., as a voluntary act involving the whole personality.

A good expression of the "healthy-mindedness" which is based upon the belief in the universal

<sup>1</sup> *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. IX, p. 507.

fatherhood of God is found in the writings of Dr. Edward Everett Hale, the eminent Unitarian preacher. After reciting with some satisfaction the experiences of his early life in which religious struggles were wholly absent, he deplures "the religious struggles which come into many biographies," adding: "a child who is early taught that he is God's child, that he may live and move and have his being in God and that he has, therefore, infinite strength at hand for the conquering of any difficulty, will take life more easily and will probably make more of it than one who is told that he is born a child of wrath and wholly incapable of good."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Hale's son, Prof. Edward Everett Hale, Jr., professor in Union College, Syracuse, New York, was converted in a meeting held in the State Street Methodist Church in December, 1905, and in making his public profession said, in part: "I am of New England birth and a New Englander is not apt to be carried away by anything emotional. I am a man of books, of an intellectual life, associated constantly with students, and such men do not take such steps under enthusiasm. Most of you are aware of the fact that I was a Unitarian and that they are known as a sect which lays more stress on reason and intellect than on the heart. . . . The first sermon preached here by Dr. Dawson was one on Prayer and it was almost by accident that I happened to go. . . . I went to hear Dr. Dawson

<sup>1</sup> Starbuck: "Psychology of Religion," p. 305.

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again on Friday, Sunday and Monday, and during this time I became conscious of a curious change which was going on in myself, which I did not and cannot now explain. Many things which had been much to me—indeed all—had ceased to interest me. Interest in life began to have a curious dullness in regard to some things. I do not mean in the carrying on of my college duties, but in art, literature, nature, etc. I began to have a greater love for others, for humanity, for people in general. . . . On the invitation of my friend, Dr. Adams—whom I shall never forget in that respect—I made the decision to follow Christ. I said: ‘I am a sinner. I am resolved to surrender and take up the spiritual ministry of Christ.’ ”<sup>1</sup> In a later address, Professor Hale said: “I do not see how God is readily thought of as a God of love, save as He is revealed to us as such by Jesus. I must confess that in spite of the importance of this element in my father’s preaching, it was never a realized element in my own belief. . . . I did not see it till I saw the love of God revealed to us in the life and the death and the life everlasting of Jesus. That was a light by which I could see what had been there before but unseen.”<sup>2</sup>

The theory of the father fails in the son, that son who, in pleading for conversion, said: “It may take a variety of forms, but it is always a surrender of the individual to the spiritual mastery of Christ. That is the essential thing. Repentance of sin,

<sup>1</sup> Frost: “Experience of Grace,” pp. 33-34.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

submission of self, devotion to God, these are but different phases of a single process ; a process at the beginning of which we are our own man and at the end belong to somebody else—to Christ.”<sup>1</sup> The voluntary transfer of the control of one’s life to Christ, making Him the arbiter of all the decisions, the Master of all the activities of life, is conversion—an act which is incomplete unless it becomes a permanent attitude of the soul.

Another group of those who maintain the abnormality of conversion teach the divinity of man. One of these says that, “ God is the life of our life, our very life itself. We are partakers of the life of God ; and though we differ from Him in that we are individualized spirits, while He is the Infinite spirit, including us, as well as all else beside, yet in essence the life of God and the life of man are identically the same and so are one. They differ not in essence or quality ; they differ in degree. . . . To recognize our own divinity and our intimate relations to the Universal is to attach the belts of our machinery to the power-house of the Universe. One need remain in hell no longer than one chooses to ; we can rise to any heaven we ourselves choose.”<sup>2</sup> The exponents of New Thought use a Christian nomenclature but their leading ideas are anti-Christian. They practice a skillful eclecticism and every religion is highly honoured. They assure every man that unlimited powers are lying

<sup>1</sup> Frost : “ Experience of Grace,” p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> “ Varieties of Religious Experience,” p. 101.

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within his reach, waiting only the assertion of his divinity to be used for his benefit and profit. God becomes simply the Generator of infinite power, the connection with which man may switch on or off as he wills. They relieve the human soul from the sense of sin and guilt by bringing God down to the moral level of man. If man is divine, he needs no conversion; and if he needs no conversion that which we call sin is either a mere negation, or good in the making or the action of a divine being seeking in a mistaken way a fuller self-realization. These views have been ably defended. In any case the redemptive element, the distinctively characteristic element of Christianity, is wholly rejected.

### SALVATION BY EDUCATION

Geo. A. Coe says in "The Religion of a Mature Mind," "Salvation by education is a possibility and a fact, because education is not merely something that we do to and for the child and not merely this united with the child's own efforts for himself. God is the central reality of the whole. He is the moving force, the giver of the inner law and the goal of all human development. Through education He extends His saving grace to the child. Such training can begin with infancy and it can continue until old age and it can and does bring men to obedient recognition of God as the supreme Reality. Christ is the Way, the Truth and Life. This is salvation by education."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Religion of a Mature Mind," p. 319.

The representatives of this increasingly popular theory make much of Christian culture, and they attempt to prove their theory by showing that there are many devout Christians who cannot tell anything of their conversion, but whose devoted, consecrated lives give proof of their faith and loyalty. They declare that conversion is the experience only of those who have fallen into sin, while the goal of Christian endeavour is to so train the child that he will never fall into sin, and never need to be converted.

Zinzendorf "declared to the Moravian Church that he could not tell the time when he first decided for Christ and had no knowledge of the time when he did not love Him." Richard Baxter was at one time distressed because he could not recall the moment when he first gave himself to Jesus Christ, but reflection led him to the following conclusion: "I afterwards perceived that education is God's ordinary way for the conveyance of grace and ought no more to be set in opposition to the Spirit than the preaching of the Word and that it was the great mercy of God to begin with me so soon to prevent such sin that might have been my shame and sorrow while I lived; that repentance is good, but prevention and innocence is better, which though we cannot attain in perfection, yet the more the better."<sup>1</sup> G. Campbell Morgan "cannot recall any definite time of his conversion. He believes that the gift of grace may be uncon-

<sup>1</sup> *Reliquiæ*, pp. 6-7.

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sciously received, especially children who have been taught from their earliest years that they belong to Christ."

The champions of Christian nurture point out the fact that many who have had a marked emotional experience fall away and that after the adolescent period "no important difference can be discovered between persons who experience a conscious conversion and those who have simply kept up their religious growth." The conclusion which follows is thus stated by R. J. Cooke in "Christianity and Childhood." "The state of the living infant is essentially the same for an infant as the state into which regeneration brings the adult. . . . Over against the tendency to evil there is originated, by the Holy Ghost, the tendency to the good."<sup>1</sup>

Denying in one breath the necessity of conversion, these exponents of salvation through education hasten to say that about the time when the child comes to the period of accountability, or the adolescent age, there is to be expected a certain awakening of the spiritual consciousness. Dr. J. T. McFarland in "Preservation versus the Rescue of the Child," says: "We have failed to make the proper distinction between conversion and the coming into clearness of spiritual consciousness. The former is necessary only in the case of those who have fallen away from God through voluntary sin. Failing to make this distinction, we have fallen into the error of regarding certain ex-

<sup>1</sup> "Christianity and Childhood," p. 121.

periences which come naturally to children in their normal and spiritual development as conversion, while in reality it is only what may be called 'the spiritual awakening' that is a necessary incident to the spiritual life, when that which lies latent and undefined in the mind becomes active and definite. This corresponds in the spiritual life to what occurs ordinarily in the mental life. The development of the mind in any large way requires a mental awakening, when the mind becomes eager and questioning and hungry; when its eyes are opened and it begins to look out upon the world of things with interest and strong desire for knowledge. To the soul also must come a time when it awakens from vague into distinct consciousness of God, when its spiritual cravings take definite direction, when in fact the soul becomes conscious of itself and its moral power. Such an awakening should be expected in the history of every child, but it may have nothing in common with what we know as conversion or regeneration in an adult."

One moment they deny the necessity of conversion and the next they insist upon a spiritual change in which all the essentials of conversion appear. When a Methodist, such as Dr. McFarland, takes this position, the primary interest is to furnish a basis for the reception of infants into the church as probationary members and with this as a foundation, the reasonableness of infant baptism becomes apparent. Falling from grace, according to this theory, precedes and conditions conversion. They

seek to preserve the sinlessness of the child until he passes through "the spiritual awakening," but even the exponents of sinless perfection do not believe in perfect sinlessness after the spiritual awakening. The necessity of conversion appears, they admit, when the consciousness of sin arises. If this consciousness of sin comes after the spiritual awakening, then the child will have to be converted in the old-fashioned sense, and the child has been led into two serious blunders regarding his salvation: 1. In baptism when the minister announced that he was born in Christ and an heir of eternal life; 2. When with his so-called spiritual awakening he was again assured of his salvation. If the spiritual awakening is identical with conversion—as frequently beyond a doubt it is—the exponents of this theory then are simply juggling with words.

The evangelical psychologist refuses to accept the term, "healthy-mindedness." The three leading groups who compose "the healthy-minded," viz., the Christian Scientists; the exponents of the New Theology, New Thought and Liberal Christianity, and the growing number of those who assert that the child needs no conversion, may be better described by their deficiencies than by the optimistic attitude which healthy-mindedness suggests. The Christian Scientists lack sight. They are willfully blind to the reality of sin. The believers in the universal fatherhood of God and universal divinity of man lack insight. They realize imperfectly if they realize at all the holi-

ness of God and they take such a superficial view of man that they fail entirely to discover that dynamic of degeneration which the theologians call "original sin." The third group, composed of those who hold that the child needs to be guarded lest he be converted away from the heavenly Kingdom into which he was born, lack foresight. They confuse the immaturity of infancy with sinlessness, refusing to recognize the fact that with the appearance of moral powers sin appears in the life of every expanding personality. For the title, "The Healthy-Minded," the evangelical psychologist substitutes as a more truthful description, "The Blind."

The healthy-minded are those who have eyes but they see not, and ears but they hear not. That they do not realize the presence and power of sin does not prove sin to be an illusion, but rather that the healthy-minded are themselves spiritually defective—morally undeveloped, morally deficient, and sometimes morally degenerate.

### THE CONDITIONS OF CONVERSION

Conversion is possible only when a cleavage appears in consciousness. The character of the conversion is determined by the depth of the cleavage. A characteristic of the cleavage is the appearance of that which makes a claim upon the will, requiring the rearing of a new controlling centre within consciousness. In the conversion of Lord Nelson the claim was that of his king and his country,

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and his conversion made him a patriot. It takes nothing from Christian conversion to admit that, psychologically viewed, there are other and radically different conversions. On the other hand, admitting the fact, proof is afforded that all men are capable of having the experience and tends to establish the view that all men need to be converted.

In Christian conversion, the cleavage appears with the vision of self as a moral failure—a sinner, and of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, holy, loving, forgiving and rightfully claiming loving trust and reverent obedience. The recognition of the rightfulness of the claims of Christ and the voluntary transfer to Him of the control of one's life comprise Christian conversion.

In the life of Count Leo Tolstoy two distinct conversions, the latter one unmistakably Christian, are to be found. In a short essay entitled "My Three Stages of Life" written by him a few months before his death, he reviews his spiritual development. The three stages which appear in the normal development of the child here also appear, but in Tolstoy's life they cover a period of nearly eighty years. In the first stage, he makes all of his readjustments upon the basis of "thought and things" and his supreme endeavour is to get the greatest possible enjoyment out of the things of this life. In the second, there is the recognition of God as the source of moral order, and the duty of loving and serving his fellow man. The second

stage of Tolstoy's progress is simply a conversion to social service, but in the third, thank God, he rightly relates himself to God.

"Every man," so Tolstoy writes, "lives through three stages of development, and at present I am in the last of these stages. In the first stage a man lives only for himself, for his passions and impulses; for eating and drinking; for passing the time merrily; for hunting and for female society; for ambition and for vanity. His life is rich and full. So it was with me up to my thirtieth year, until my first gray hair. Other men part with this period of their lives much more rapidly.

"When I had traversed this stage, I began to think of the welfare of others, of all men, of all humanity. All my religious sentiments became concentrated upon the happiness of others and on the accomplishment of the Kingdom of Heaven and Earth. This aspiration was as strong as, and filled my life as completely as, my first aspiration to personal happiness.

"But now I feel that this last inspiration is in turn dead. It has ceased to fill my life, it no longer carries me away; and I have been obliged to propose to myself the question: Was there really anything good in work directed towards helping men in their struggles against drunkenness and against superstition?

"I felt that within me was being born yet a new phase of life, a new foundation of life, which must replace all others, because it contains an aspiration

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to the happiness of humanity, which, in turn, contains an aspiration to personal happiness. This new foundation is work in the service of God, and the fulfillment of His commandments and His will. This is not the perfecting of one's self. No, it is something else. It is an aspiration to divine purity.

"The aspiration to, and the preparation for, a new life replace the former conditions which they were born out of; and in them there is happiness both for the individual and for all humanity. Preparing for the new life, I attain at the same time my former aim, the good of humanity, more surely than when this was my only aim. Aspiring to attain God, aspiring to a purity of divine Being in myself and in my new life, I find more assuredly both happiness for humanity and for myself.

"And this is entirely without haste and without exhaustion, but with the joyful consciousness of a tranquil conscience.

"May God help me!"<sup>1</sup>

Every intelligent moral being is capable of conversion. The preaching of the Gospel imposes upon him who hears a moral obligation to be converted; and every one converted is converted by and only by the voluntary transfer of the control of his will to the spiritual mastery of Jesus Christ, a transfer made for life and made because of the soul's trustful love for Jesus Christ and willingness to follow Him in reverent devotion and joyful obedience.

<sup>1</sup> *Collier's Weekly.*

There is infinite variety in the human countenance; yet certain facial features are always present. There is even greater variety in the psychic phenomena which make the world of experience for each individual, yet the psychic laws, the unfolding processes, the important characteristics of mind are the same in one personality as in all other personalities. The mind is a unit functioning in a variety of ways, not a congerie of faculties each performing a distinct and different task. The laws which govern the mind's activities are identical whether the mind is acting in the realm of intelligence, morality or religious relationships. The laws which are evident in the process that ends in the mind being rightly related to other intelligences, operate in the higher realm where the soul becomes rightly related to God. There is infinite variety in the ways by which each mind becomes rightly related to its environment whether we conceive of this environment in terms of things or of persons or of God.

It follows that there is infinite variety in the phenomena of conversion, yet its psychic laws, its unfolding processes, its important characteristics appear in every conversion whatever may be its type. The laws of conversion are universal laws and they appear whenever the mind seeks a new relationship to a newly recognized environment. Its unfolding process is the universal process which always appears whenever the mind discovers a cleavage in consciousness and seeks to overcome the

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dualism which this cleavage produces and attains the end sought by an "at-one-ment" through faith, the realization of a reconciliation upon a higher mental level. Its important characteristics are universal characteristics: the reorganization of the inner life about a new controlling centre, the realization that the divided self has been succeeded by the unified self; the realizing and the releasing of new powers, emotional, volitional and intellectual. These characterize all conversions, intellectual, moral as well as spiritual.

The Christian sees that God has wrought His purpose into the structure of the human mind and He has made conversion the originating experience for the self-realization of the expanding mind in intelligence, morality and religion. Conversion, therefore, taking the scientific view, is necessary to the child's fullest self-realization; and to bring into his life influences that will keep him from anticipating the conversion experience is to put stumbling-blocks in the way of a little child.

## V

### THE RELIGION OF THE CHILD

A BOY, twelve years of age, coming up to the Passover from Nazareth, finds his way to the Court of the Temple where a group of learned rabbis were discussing the Law. He enjoyed a greater freedom than boys of twelve in Western lands, and "hence Jerusalem, with its thousands of wonders, lay before him to study as he chose." From infancy, this Boy has been reared in a deeply religious home. The study of the family life among the devout Jews of this period enables us to reproduce to a greater or a less degree the religious development of the young Pilgrim from Nazareth.

It has been said that the Hebrews possess a talent for religion, and certainly at no period of their history did the Jews cultivate intellectually this talent with greater zeal than during the period beginning with our Christian era. Herod the Great had suppressed all political discussion. Therefore, the thought of the Jewish people with passionate appreciation centred upon religious themes. The real leaders of the people were the rabbis, the interpreters of the Mosaic law. From their earliest history the Hebrews had emphasized family worship

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and religious instruction in the home. The devout Jew began his religious activities with the moment of waking, his first thoughts being a prayer of thankfulness for the restoration of life. Before taking as many as four steps, he washed his hands and face to cleanse the defilement of sleep. Audible prayer accompanied the commonplace act of washing the face, and a spiritual significance was given to every movement. Religion was kept ever in mind throughout the day both by symbolic rites and by prescribed words. "Lengthened prayers in set forms had to be repeated three times each day and also at all feasts, half feasts and fast days ; each kind of day having its special prayers."

The mother necessarily was the child's first teacher, though the father was "bound to teach his son." The earliest impressions of the Jewish child were associated with the mother kindling the Sabbath lamp and preparing the Sabbath meal. As soon as he was able to speak his religious instruction began, special attention being given to the cultivation of memory. The Shema, the Jewish Creed, was learned, together with selected portions of the Law, and the Psalms used on important religious occasions. At the age of six he was sent to the Synagogue school and until ten, the Old Testament, beginning with the book of Leviticus, was the only text-book used ; from ten to fifteen he studied the Mishna or traditional law. The Jewish boys attended a graded school. Attendance upon the Synagogue service every Sabbath with its silent and

audible prayers, its reading of the Law and the Prophets, the responses of the congregation, the eighteen benedictions, closing with the congregation crying in unison: "The Lord shall reign forever, even Thy God, O Zion, unto all generations, hallelujah," deepened, broadened and stimulated the child's expanding religious life. Behind the simple words of Luke, "and the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon Him," lie the years of experience which I have briefly indicated in describing the religious development of the average Jewish child.

It was probably about the year A. D. 8 that Jesus went up to the Passover feast. The years of training at Nazareth fitted Him for the rare enjoyment that comes, when the eager, hungry imagination finds the very spot about which its dreaming long has centred. How often He must have repeated the words: "Our feet shall stand in Thy courts, O Jerusalem." With what thrilling delight He must have surveyed her towers, her bulwarks and her palaces, and most of all "the Temple, with its marble and gilded pinnacle, flaming in the sunlight like a mountain of ivory and gold." Entering perhaps the Lily Gate, He would see stretching far to the right and the left the world-famous Solomon's Porch—now thronged with multitudes; pilgrims from all parts of the Roman Empire, and among them the sellers of sheep, oxen and doves, the bankers haggling over the changing of foreign coin for Jewish money, a scene of extraordinary

animation, the air vibrating with the deep surf-like roar of thousands and thousands of voices—while above all this, rising terrace upon terrace, the Court of the Women, the Court of the Israelites, the Court of the Priests, and above all that glorious pile, “The joy of the whole earth, the Temple of the Great King.”

The doors stood open, but the heavy curtains of Babylonian purple concealed the sacred interior from the vulgar gaze. Beyond those curtains lay the awful Holy of Holies, untrodden by human foot save when the High Priest entered on the Great Day of Atonement. For nearly one thousand years this had been for the Hebrew world the most hallowed spot on earth. So Jesus comes to the Temple. How the imagination is stirred by the scene—Jesus greater than the Temple, holier than the Holy of Holies, the everlasting sacrifice standing before Israel’s smoking altar, the express image of the invisible God beside whom the glory of the Shekinah paled into darkness! Yet the tens of thousands there saw only a little Galilean, clad perhaps “in red kaftin and gay tunic, girded with an embroidered sash and covered, perchance, with a loose outer jacket of white or blue.”

The feast is probably over and amid the indescribable bustle and confusion, the thousands of pilgrims begin the homeward journey. Mary and Joseph were not greatly disturbed by the absence of Jesus until the first day’s journey neared its end. Then He could not be found. With hearts trem-

bling with unutterable fear, they hastened back to the city seeking Jesus. It was not until the third day that they discovered the lost child. They found Him, to their amazement, "sitting in the midst of the Rabbis, both hearing them and asking them questions," and with mingled gladness and pride they observe that "all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers." It is an interesting fact that the first recorded act in the life of Jesus is His matriculation in a theological seminary and that during His brief sojourn, He filled both the positions of student and instructor. With some agitation, Mary says: "Child, why didst Thou thus to us? Behold Thy father and I were seeking Thee in sorrow."

#### THE ESSENTIALS OF THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Now we hear the first recorded words of our Master. Have they seemed to you simply a part of an interesting incident, upon which as a basis you have pictured the boyhood of Jesus? Has it never impressed you that there is something wonderful in the fact that this incident alone should be given us and nearly thirty years should be passed over in silence? Why do these words appear? Can it be other than there is given here something of supreme importance and that this matter of importance is nothing other than the presentation in the briefest form of the essentials of a child's religion: "How is it that ye sought Me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"

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In these concluding words Jesus gave not only the explanation of His presence in the temple, but He states succinctly and comprehensively the great and controlling facts of His life together with those attitudes of mind which were destined to determine all future actions. The Greek, as you know, says: "I must be in the things of My Father." Exegetes differ as to the reference, whether it is "the Father's house"—the Temple, "the Father's business"—a larger meaning, or "the Father's things"—the largest possible extension of meaning. Without entering further into exegetical problems, I must express a preference for the King James reading, "I must be about My Father's business."

The whole of human experience is divided into two parts: one, the world of description, of fact, of science; the other, the world of appreciation, of worths, of æsthetics. The one includes all that is and has been, and the student in this field surveys the past from the view-point of an ever-progressive changing present; the other includes all the present interpreted in terms of becoming, and with it, all the future which is susceptible of modification through personal control, and the student in this field surveys the whole movement of human experience from the standpoint of personal appreciation. The one is the world of "what is," and the other is the world of "what ought to be." The one is the field of science, the domain of permanent relationships; and the other the field of æsthetics, the domain of creative relationships. Religion belongs

to both worlds. On the one hand, religion may be described, its facts may be studied and its science may be organized into the formulæ of theology ; on the other hand, religion, engaged in the creation of a godlike character, reveals the presence of attitudes of appreciation, of worth, which direct the activities towards the making of the most beautiful of all artistic productions, a human yet godlike personality. Religion is, therefore, both a science and an art. Religion manifests both aspects, each complementing the other. And when we have discovered the essentials of religion from the side of science and from the side of art, and bring these together, we have presented the standard by which the religion of every man is to be rightly and truthfully judged.

In these words of the boy Jesus, "I must be about My Father's business," we have presented in a complete and comprehensive way all the essentials of religion viewed both as a science and an art. We have given the three fundamental scientific facts in religion : (1) "I"—self-consciousness ; (2) "Must"—duty-consciousness ; (3) "Father"—God-consciousness. We have given also the three fundamental creative attitudes vitally essential in urging, guiding and strengthening all the powers of personality towards the effort to make as a work of truest and sublimest art a character like unto the perfect and glorious character of God. (1) "I must be *about*," or literally, "I must be *in* the things of My Father"—alertness. God is the

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North star of the soul's compass and the needle of attention must ever point Godward. (2) "I must be about *My Father's* business"—affection. The love of God takes precedence over every other affection and devotion to Him as Father, dominates all personal experience. (3) "I must be about My Father's *business*," or literally, "the things of My Father"—activity. Activity is the universal law of life. Alertness, affection, activity,—the creative principles controlling the thoughts, the emotions and the volitions of personality; and all dominated by the overmastering purpose to be well-pleasing unto God. This, in brief, is the religion of the child Jesus, and the religion of Jesus is the norm, the perfect standard, the first and the final test of every man's religion. In these words: "I must be about My Father's business," Jesus made His first public profession of His faith—but that it was not the first is implied in the words "wist ye not?" How often He had endeavoured to make that sweet, simple-hearted, blundering mother understand His relation to God, we know not. All through the years Mary pondered and only the resurrection illuminated the obscurities of her thoughts and cleared away the shadows of her mind.

### THE SCIENTIFIC FACTS IN THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Self-consciousness, duty-consciousness, and God-consciousness are the fundamental, scientific facts of personal experience which become the originat-

ing conditions of the Christian life. Self-consciousness is the originating condition of all intellectual growth, the concomitant of all personal progress. Self-consciousness marks the difference between man and all other forms of life. Self-consciousness implies self-determination and separateness—the essentials of human personality. Duty-consciousness is the originating condition of all ethical growth, the concomitant of all ethical progress. Duty-consciousness marks the difference between the responsibilities of man and the irresponsibility of all other forms of life. Duty-consciousness implies conscience and personal freedom—the essentials of the ethical personality. God-consciousness is the originating condition of the more abundant life—the life eternal, the concomitant of all communion of God with man. God-consciousness implies the abiding presence of God in the soul of man and marks the difference between the child of God and unredeemed humanity. God-consciousness implies a knowledge of God, a personal faith in God and the obedience of love. These all appear in the religion of Jesus.

#### THE CREATIVE ATTITUDES IN THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Alertness is sensitiveness to sensations, accompanied by immediacy of response. Alertness is mental activity and is the prerequisite of attention. The alert mind rapidly acquires knowledge; the alert conscience rapidly acquires moral insight and

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ethical discrimination ; the alert spirit rapidly acquires an understanding of the deep things of God. Alertness to God means that, as the personality faces each new situation, the mind immediately seeks to know the thought and the will of God. It is this alertness that lies behind the words of the Master: "It is My meat and drink to do the will of Him who sent Me."

Affection is the desire to bless ; if the loved one is dependent, affection yearns to minister and incites the will to loving service ; if the loved one is beyond the need of ministry, then affection manifests itself in loving trustfulness and adoration. There enters into affection the desire to possess and love delights in saying "my" and "mine." Affection for God implies trust and adoration, eagerness to serve and delight in possessing Him as one's heavenly Father.

Activity is the manifestation of life. Activity is the condition that makes possible growth. The active life develops latent resources and secures for the personality the fullness of power. The translation of truth into conduct forms the foundation that stands unshaken when the storm beats and the floods break. Love transforms painful duties into the sweetest of earthly joys. Action builds character, and activities for the glory of God enable us to present the most artistic of all productions as we show forth in our lives "the excellencies of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvellous light."

In the words of Jesus, "I must be about My Father's business," appear the essentials of the Christian life. If, in any life, all do not appear he may be near the Kingdom but he is not in it. Self-consciousness and duty-consciousness are essential to the moral life; but God-consciousness is necessary, absolutely necessary to the true religious life. God-consciousness is mediated by Christ—and there is salvation in none other. Alertness precedes the giving of personal attention to the claims of Christ; affection follows his acceptance, and activity in His name is conditional upon both knowledge and love, and is essential to the production of a Christlike character.

#### THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROBLEM IN RELIGION

Behind the scientific facts and the creative principles there remains something yet undiscussed. Through the psychic process of the unfolding life an increasing purpose runs. One might imagine the whole domain of the material universe to be due to the fortuitous concourse of atoms, but no one could imagine such a possibility in accounting for the development of the mind of man, who, gaining for himself freedom, uses it only that he may voluntarily bow to a higher revealed authority. In mental play, he gained freedom only to voluntarily submit to the authority of the thought world into which he had come. In his capricious revolt against the commands of his elders, he gained a

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new freedom, only to voluntarily submit to the authority of the moral world into which he had entered. With his realization that wrong-doing was sin against God, and with the recognition that Christ rightfully claimed authority over his life, the Christian, in the exercise of spiritual freedom, voluntarily submits to the control of Christ.

But this survey, though it may show the operation of the law most fundamental in the upward progress of the human personality, does not altogether furnish the explanation we seek. Description alone can never satisfy the inquiring mind of man. When you have answered the question "What?" instinctively man asks the question "Why?" One of the most suggestive phases of modern thought is the interest which psychology, philosophy and theology are taking in epistemology—the science of knowledge. There is no subject of greater concern to the thinkers of the twentieth century than the foundations of knowledge. Pragmatism has gained temporary recognition only because it furnishes a temporary hypothesis. Man cannot be satisfied until he knows the truth, and knows the truth to be true. When you offer him knowledge which is only relative, he is confused and confounded. It is this deep-rooted desire for infallibility that has led him to accept so unquestioningly external authority such as the Roman Church. But the acceptance of external authority has in turn prevented his discovering

authority within his own experience—a law written in his own heart.

Broadly speaking, epistemologists are divided into two groups: intellectualists and voluntarists; one making the basis of knowledge or truth the intellect or reason; and the other making it the will. Any discussion of these would take us far afield. Yet we cannot leave the subject here. Men are ruled by ideas and only those ideas that express the truth have the right to rule. The seat of authority in religion is truth apperceived and obeyed by a free personality. The way to this realization is given in the words of the Master: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God or whether I speak of Myself." Frederick W. Robertson interprets this to mean that obedience is the organ of spiritual knowledge. This is true but it is not all the truth. It leaves out of account those things that inspire and make possible obedience.

#### FAITH, THE PRINCIPLE OF PROGRESS

The development of the child's mind is marked by the emergence of a series of dualisms, each of which is transcended by a reconciliation upon a higher mental level. And this transcendence is possible only because of the personal participation of the child. In the very beginning the child's consciousness is, says Ward, "an undifferentiated continuum." "The child," says William James, "does not see light but is light." The separation

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of the outer world as a thing apart from his feelings, has not even begun. The dualism of inner and outer emerges later, and this is transcended in experience by the discovery and the recognition of self-consciousness. Reflection, to use the terminology of Hegel, makes the wound and also heals it. Reflection discovers the dualism of the inner and the outer, and reflection reunites and harmonizes the sundered experience by recognizing the subject-object relationship of consciousness, the self and the not-self.

Later the child passes into what we have called "play-mode," the world of make-believe. "This," says Sully, "is the happy age of childhood when a new and wondrous world created by a lively fancy rivals in distinctness, aye, in brightness too, the nearest spaces of the world on which the bodily eye looks out before reflection has begun to draw a hard dividing line between the domain of historical truth and fiction." When the little child realizes that his world of fancy, so real to him, is a baseless fabric, an unsubstantial pageant which must dissolve, there arises the dualism of knowledge and error, of the true and the false. Now there is placed upon the little child the same limitations which bind every personality, namely, every solution, every problem presented to his thought, must be solved by the use of that which is a part of his own personal experience. As my classmate at Johns Hopkins, Dr. William Davis Furry, says, "Consciousness is able to unify itself and thus reach a higher platform of

mental determination only by a reading forward of its present store of meanings and attaching to them meanings which they are not known to possess and accepting them and treating them as if they already possessed the meanings thus attached to them.”<sup>1</sup>

The hypothesis of some thing held as possible, the acceptance of some thing as if its reality were already realized, describes the process by which the little child emerges from “the make-believe world” which fancy creates, and becomes a participating member of the thought-world of his elders. The Scripture puts it: “Faith is the giving substance to things hoped for, the testing of things not seen.” Science to-day postulates personal faith as a condition which makes possible the life of intelligence. Psychologists recognize personal faith as the active principle which makes possible that necessary psychic conversion which precedes intelligent activity.

The evangelical program for the development of the religious life is the universal program, manifested alike in the development of the mental and the moral life. The laws of the spiritual world, which we have formulated as our evangelical doctrines, are universal principles, operating throughout the whole domain of personality. Conversion and personal faith as the human condition of conversion are grounded in personality and rest upon the same foundation upon which intelligence and morality also are founded. God has wrought His purpose into the structure of man’s mind and throughout

<sup>1</sup> *The Psychological Review*, 1908, p. 31.

the entire mental process, in the domain of intelligence and morality, as well as personal religion, this purpose is expressed, and the variations which appear grow out of the differences in the environment to which the mind readjusts itself; intelligence deals with "thought and things"; morality deals with "thought and personal relations"; religion deals with "thought and the personal relation with God." Whatever the environment, the readjustment must be made by a free personality acting voluntarily.

Professor Baldwin says: "The growth of the individual's intellectual constructions of personal reality gives him a basis for anticipating moral and social events, and for endeavouring by what we may call an act of faith—the outreach seen in all the prospective references of his growth towards the newer event of that on which he depends, and the newer manifestation of that of which he stands in awe—to put himself in harmony with the general and ideal personal realities of the universe. His striving shows itself in the institutions of religion; and his justification of it is his faith. So instead of the formula of Matthew Arnold: 'Religion is morality touched with emotion,' I should prefer to say from the study of psychology of development: 'Religion is emotion kindled by faith, emotion being reverence for a person and faith being dependence upon Him.'"<sup>1</sup>

There are two types of reverence: the one the fear of the slave, as he thinks of the austere and

<sup>1</sup> "Social and Ethical Interpretations," pp. 365-366.

unfeeling authority of his master; and the other the reverence of the child as he thinks of the loving authority of his father. There are two types of dependence: one the dependence of the slave upon the provision made by his master; the other, dependence of the child upon the bounty of his father. The slave obeys from compulsion and the child obeys from love. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, viewed from a scientific standpoint, calls for readjustment to it, a readjustment in which the whole personality participates. With the completion of this readjustment, all the deepest human needs are abundantly met; to God there is given the reverence and the love of the little child; a peace born of childlike trustfulness possesses the heart; and the soul and God, the two scientific facts which of all others stand most sure, enter into a life of everlasting union and communion. The Christian religion meets every human need and is exactly suited to man's capacity to appropriate. Religion is the goal of all mental development, and the organizing and unifying principle of the whole mental process.

Science confirms the evangelical position upon every point where science is competent to speak. Science finds a conversion at the beginning of each new mode of mental life, and shows that personal intelligence and personal morality, as well as personal religion, are alike conditioned upon such a conversion. Science affirms personal faith as the instrumental cause in making possible the mental progress of the individual. Commonness, or the

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identity of experience, lies at the basis of all social intercourse. All education is founded upon communication. As we have seen, in the delayed experience of Helen Keller, the child comes to believe in words as the symbols of "thought and things," and through faith enters into the fellowship of thought. Instead of religion being the product of the social element in personality, it is the upward movement of the religious principle which makes possible society.

### THE DIVIDED SELF, THE NORMAL PROGRESSIVE SELF

The most important contribution of science to the evangelical position yet remains for our consideration. We have already referred to the fact that all development of personality is marked by the appearance within consciousness of new dualisms; and that the mind progresses only by the transcendence of these dualisms, a transcendence made possible by a reconciliation upon a higher mental level. We found that such a dualism appears in and is necessary to self-consciousness, duty-consciousness and God-consciousness. When the child becomes aware of self as the persisting presence whose function is realized in interpreting, unifying and thus comprehending all his personal experiences, he, by a voluntary act of faith, accepts the guidance of older and wiser minds, and thus enters upon the more abundant life of intelligence. In like manner as he becomes aware of conscience

as the persisting presence whose function is realized in interpreting, unifying and thus comprehending all his moral experiences, he, by a voluntary act of faith, accepts the moral law, established in the moral life about him, as the standard of daily living, and thus enters upon the more abundant moral life. In the same way he becomes aware of God as the eternal Presence in whom he lives and moves and has his being, whose holy purpose is realized through interpreting, unifying and thus comprehending all the child's distinctly religious experiences; the child by a voluntary act of faith accepts the guidance of God as manifested by the Holy Spirit; gives to Jesus Christ the allegiance of his life and thus enters upon the more abundant life everlasting. In each instance, there is a cleavage in consciousness, followed by a reconciliation; and the character of the reconciliation is determined by the depth of the cleavage.

The moral progress of the race tends where uninterrupted to the intensifying of the consciousness of this cleavage. The sense of sin naturally increases with the enlargement and enrichment of the social life, and its diminution is proof of the presence of a blinding and deadening influence. Josiah Royce thus describes the development of this cleavage in consciousness: "Higher social cultivation breeds spiritual enmities. For it trains what we in our day call individualism and, upon precisely its most cultivated levels, glories in creating highly conscious individuals. But these indi-

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viduals are brought to consciousness by their social contrasts and conflicts. Their very consciences are tainted by the original sin of social contentiousness. The higher the cultivation, the vaster and deeper are precisely the more spiritual and the more significant of these inward and outward conflicts. Cultivation breeds civilized conduct; and it also breeds conscious independence of spirit and deep inner opposition to all mere external authority.

“Before this sort of moral evil the moral individual, thus cultivated, is, if viewed merely as a creature of cultivation, powerless. His very conscience is the product of spiritual warfare; and its knowledge of good and evil is tainted by its origin. The burden grows, and the moral individual cannot bear it, unless his whole type of self-consciousness is transformed by a new spiritual power which this type of cultivation can never of itself furnish.”<sup>1</sup> When there is presented to this individual not only the ethical standards of the society of which he is a part but the demands of a holy, righteous God, the sense of failure to realize the ideal life deepens the cleavage until it becomes conviction of sin.

The problem of the religious training of the child, as we face it to-day, is whether we should deepen in the consciousness of the child this cleavage by bringing to bear upon him the thought of the holiness of God and awaken in the child the conviction of sin and the sense of separation from

<sup>1</sup> “The Problem of Christianity,” Vol. I, p. 144.

God, or whether we shall gloss over and minimize this cleavage. Our fathers made the cleavage deep and terrifying, and the result is seen in the wonderful emotional experiences that accompanied conversion. The present day tendency is away from this. It is well for us to heed the word of science before we conclude that we are wiser than our fathers. G. Stanley Hall says: "A childhood too happy and careless is a calamity so great that prayer against it might stand in the old English Service Book beside the petition that 'our children be not poltroons.' "

From the view-point of the Christian psychologist, the greatest of all dangers, threatening the Home, the State and Christianity itself, is the rearing of children so that they never experience fear. They grow up self-centred, autocratic, godless pleasure-lovers, stunted intellectually, degenerated morally, and practically incapable of religious experience. Parents who seek to protect their children from everything except the pleasurable; teachers who endeavour to entertain rather than train; preachers whose shallow minds have never sounded the depths of human need or grasped even for a moment the meaning of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, preaching a Gospel of culture; endanger our social order more than all the McNamaras of Anarchy. Christianity is a religion of redemption, and anything else is a misrepresentation and a caricature. Christianity in the Gospel offers to the sundered self, the sick soul, the personality of the child conscious of

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separation from God, a way by which reconciliation may be realized through faith in Jesus Christ. This cleavage in consciousness, this dualism of a sinning soul and a holy, righteous, loving God is just as necessary to the reconciliation as the Gospel itself. From a scientific view-point, the religious development of the child is fatally defective if there does not appear this sense of separation from God, which our fathers rightly called conviction of sin; for where this does not appear, the child cannot readjust himself so as to enter into right relation with God, for there is nothing in his experience to call for the desire to be reconciled to God. And this readjustment is the final, the supreme and the most essential readjustment in the history of the individual, and without it the soul is lost.

The doctrine of original sin played an important part in leading the Catholic Church to make the sacraments the means of salvation and sanctification. This doctrine has its scientific basis in the solidarity of the race. Its historical formulations were influenced by a type of philosophy in which "being" was the key-word. It was held that whatever was characteristic of human nature existed at the beginning of the individual life; therefore Latin theology interpreted sin as inhering in the constitution of man; and original sin, so they held, was the sinful state in which every one is born. It logically followed, if baptism wrought regeneration and was the divinely ordained means

of salvation, that the infant, being a sinner, must be baptized.

### THE NEW ATTITUDE

The modern view conceives of the whole universe in terms of ceaseless movement ; and the electron, the solar system and the mind of man are alike interpreted in terms of motion. The static conception of the universe is giving place to the dynamic. In the field of theology, a change is taking place in the method of interpretation, and the students of religious phenomena also are interpreting the religious life in terms of movement. From the modern view-point, sin is not a state of being, but a principle of growth, appearing in the life of the individual as soon as he gives approval to that which he knows to be wrong, and chooses voluntarily to do wrong. The child is born into a world of sinful environment ; no perfect examples of holy living surround him. Heredity has weakened his powers—mental, moral and religious. His ancestry experienced the blighting power of sin, and he bears in his own body the consequences of their wrong-doing. Through hereditary and environmental influences, sin enters ; through the first, creating conditions which make it inevitable, so far as science can see, that the expanding personality shall respond to the appeal of sin ; through the second, thrusting upon his avid consciousness suggestions as to the attractiveness and the pleasurable of sin. No life, save the Sinless One,

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has passed through the moral crisis without disaster.

From the view-point of modern science, original sin may be described as the presence of forces—environmental as well as hereditary, which makes sinful responsiveness to temptation inevitable in human experience. “The will, the interest, the subtle desire, the deep-lying thought of the man, are held in the grasp of his solidarity with the race, with the society of which he forms a part, with the past of his own thinking, his own desires and his own deeds.”<sup>1</sup> The old psychology, which studied the structure of the human mind, defines original sin as a state; the new genetic psychology, studying the growth of the mind, defines original sin as a perverting principle, a persistent power, making for unrighteousness. This principle, ever powerful and perverting, present in every personality, the originating cause of every sinful act, is the product of the individual’s connection with a blighted race and association with a social order shot through and through with sin. Original sin was formerly interpreted as a static condition; to-day it is interpreted as the dynamic of degeneration.

The action of this dynamic of degeneration creates the hostility of the human soul against the holy and loving God. The more vigorously we teach the child that wrong-doing is sin and rebellion against God, the more certainly the cleavage

<sup>1</sup> Steven : “The Psychology of the Christian Soul,” p. 236.

in consciousness will appear. This sense of separation of the soul from God awakens the realization of the need of forgiveness and reconciliation with God. In this state of mind, a realization of need is the originating condition of repentance and faith. Therefore, in the religious development of the child, the conviction in regard to sin is an essential factor in bringing about the life of communion with God. As soon as the child distinguishes clearly the difference between right and wrong and recognizes that moral relations bring with them definite responsibilities to God, so soon should we interpret to him his experience, so that he shall stand before God a self-acknowledged sinner.

If it were possible to conceive of a human being having attained moral maturity without sin, conversion would still be necessary. The demand of the intellectual life for final unity, the sense of dependence growing out of the limitations of human knowledge, the quest of thought for a Supreme Intelligence who shall comprehend all experience, create a cleavage in consciousness which the God of all wisdom alone can bridge. It is, however, in his moral failure that the child realizes most keenly his helplessness and need. The intellect has to do with the interpretation of relations; the volitions on the other hand participate actively in these relations and it is in the obliquity of his acts that the child realizes his need of the grace of God.

Therefore, in the experience of the Christian, the

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forgiveness of sin and the reconciliation of the sinner with God takes precedence over all else, though there is not lacking in the Gospel that which satisfies that craving for unity characteristic of human intellect. "Religion," says Rudolph Eucken, "should be the fact of the whole man and of his own decision but may however fail to possess more than a purely intellectual character. Through this the main fact of religion is stunted in its growth, and conscience and conviction are oppressed. This appears most of all in the conception of belief. The welfare of the soul can never link itself to belief unless that belief means more than an authoritatively transmitted doctrine, and unless the man in the inmost substance of his soul stretches forth towards the belief."<sup>1</sup>

True religion begins in the free act of a responsible and responding soul, and its unimpeded development requires that the religious forms and symbols shall perfectly accord with the experience of the soul, while creedal statements shall account for and describe the experience itself. The religious experience must precede the religious expression; and the religious expression must follow and be in harmony with the experience. Religious forms are simply means by which a living faith in Christ may express itself. For sacramentalism, together with all forms that precede and assume to anticipate the evangelical experience, inverts Christian truth and Christian experience, and wher-

<sup>1</sup> "The Truth of Religion," p. 232.

ever they appear, Christianity is "topsy-turvied," misconceived and radically misrepresented.

It is in urging the necessity of conversion that the evangelical makes this final appeal for the inward experience against the outward form, for the spirit against the letter, for the reality against the semblance, for the substance against the shadow, for the life everlasting against the mockery, for Christ against tradition and dogma, for God and the inalienable religious rights and obligations of the free personality against all institutions and interpretations that deny these rights and obligations in the interest of preserving their power and their place.

#### THE PERIODS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Conversion marks the beginning of the child's religious life, and the unfolding of the spiritual life after conversion parallels the progress of life wherever it is found. As in the plant, there is a period when the germinating life is fed from the food supply which is a part of the seed surrounding the germ of life ; so after conversion there is a period when the young Christian spontaneously and joyfully engages in Christian activities ; every religious duty is a delight and every service brings added joy. In the growing plant, there comes a time when this food supply is consumed and the tiny roots thrust their way deeper and deeper into the rich soil and the blade thrusts its way up through the soil ; the magician Chlorophyll transforms the yellow of the

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tender shoots into green and the roots begin to take up the riches of the soil, and the blade to take in the riches of the air, and through these activities, the plant attains the power of self-nourishment and self-sustentation ; so in the life of the young Christian, when the joyful feeling disappears, he is forced to find inspiration and nourishment in the performance of the commonplace duties of the religious life, and thus becomes self-nourishing and self-sustaining.

This is the most trying period in the unfolding of the individual Christian life. Having voluntarily transferred the control of his life to Jesus Christ, he must make that choice the determining principle in his decisions and his deeds, and he must do this with earnest faithfulness whether the feeling of joy accompanies the act or not. When Jesus leaves the Courts of the Temple to return to Nazareth, it is for the purpose of engaging in the commonplace duties of a lowly and restricted life, and yet He goes and is subject to His parents and obedient to their commands, for it became Him. As the young Christian thrusts the roots of his mind deep into the soil of revealed truth, and thrusts upward his aspirations in prayer—the soul's communion with God, there comes to him, as there comes to the plant, the power of self-nourishment and self-sustentation. This is the period where the psychologists of conversion find the greatest number of lapses ; this is the period when Christian pastors and teachers should be in closest sympathy with the young

Christian and possess his fullest confidence. His ultimate excellence in character depends upon the successful passage through this period.

In Nazareth Jesus formed religious habits which appear throughout His public ministry; the habits of prayer, of meditation, of Scripture study, of attendance upon public worship. So in the life of the growing disciple, the period of self-nourishment leads to the period of completely formed religious habits. Prayer, meditation, Bible study, church attendance become a part of his life, and, thank God, we are as much under control of good habits when formed as we are under the control of bad habits when they are formed.

The fourth period in the religious development of Jesus begins apparently with His public ministry when He separates Himself from those relations which made up more than nine-tenths of His earthly career and devotes Himself wholly and unreservedly to the fulfillment of His mission to the whole world. The period corresponds to the fruit-bearing of the vine. Every normal Christian life should have its period of fruit-bearing, of public ministry, of ambassadorship for God. Every Christian life should at some time heed the call of the Master when He says, "As the Father has sent Me even so send I you." Every Christian should know the joy of the winner of souls, and those who come into this experience know that no relationship of life possesses greater sacredness or thrills them with keener delight or stirs the heart with holier pas-

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sion, than the leading of a little child through the successive periods of his unfolding until he stands in the presence of Jesus Christ, and seeing Him, loves Him, gladly giving to Him the full control of life.

### THE SUMMARY

In the development of the child, self-consciousness, duty-consciousness, and God-consciousness present a succession of readjustments to new environmental conditions, each readjustment being the condition which determines the extension of the mental life into a new realm of experience. Conversion, though in common use limited to the religious readjustment, accurately describes the process which makes possible self-consciousness and duty-consciousness, the one the originating condition of intelligence and the other the originating condition of morality. The creative attitudes, alertness, affection and activity, call into service each of the leading phases of the mental life, intellect, feeling and will. The divided self does not present an abnormal mental condition, but is a necessary phase in the passing from a lower to a higher mental level. Its absence, not its presence, is proof of mental deficiency. Therefore, whatever contributes to this dividing of self which in the realm of religion is called "conviction of sin" should be brought to bear upon the child at if not before the adolescent age in order that he may realize the conditions which make possible conversion. He who sincerely

seeks the child's highest good and desires most wisely to so influence him that he shall not fail in experiencing the fullest self-realization will make the goal of his endeavour the child's conversion, knowing that when the Christian life is thus inaugurated the periods which follow will reveal a spiritual development in harmony with the laws of growth throughout the realm of life.



## Methods and Principles



## VI

### THE INSTITUTION AND THE CHILD

**I**NSTITUTIONS, such as the State and the Church, necessarily take a vital interest in the child. The preservation of these social organizations depends upon their incorporating the life of each successive generation. If the democratic state is to be preserved, the children must grow to be law-abiding, patriotic citizens; if the ecclesiastical institution is to continue, the children must accept the teachings of the Church. Democratic governments, recognizing that the perpetuation of the rule of the people depends upon the training of children in intelligence and habits of self-control, have established in the interest of political self-preservation public schools. Thus the school is supported by the state, primarily as a means for the protection of the state itself. The state encourages morality, because the inculcation of morality tends to increase the number of law-abiding, self-respecting citizens. In like manner the ecclesiastical institution has sought to control the child for the purpose of making him, through instruction, the exponent of its peculiar and distinctive tenets.

Taking a broad survey of church history, we are led to the conclusion that from the appearance of

ecclesiastical division down to the age in which we live, the training of the child has been made subservient to the interests of the Church as an institution. Only in recent years have we seen evidences of a coming change in the relation which all social organizations sustain to the child.

### THE ANCIENT WORLD AND THE CHILD

Among the ancients, infants possessed no rights. Infanticide dates backward in China to a most remote period, and is practiced there to this day. The killing of female infants prevailed throughout India until the beginning of the nineteenth century ; the Vedic law being, "Expose female children but not the male." The killing of babies was common among the majority of American aborigines, while ritual infanticide was practiced among some of the civilized and semi-civilized peoples of Mexico and Central America. In ancient times putting to death new-born infants was well-nigh universal. No blood-guilt was attached to the father, unless he put the children to death by violence, and with his own hands. Socrates speaks contemptuously of mothers grieving for their children who died through exposure. Plato and Aristotle favoured the killing of infants though they did not agree as to the mode. The interest in the welfare of children centred wholly in their future usefulness to the State. The Roman father had the right of declining to accept a new-born child if he were deformed or if in the father's judgment he was un-

suited to be a member of the family or the State. Seneca, defending the practice of his age, says, "We destroy the life of unnatural offspring, and in like manner drown children if they are born unnatural or monstrous." Against this revolting custom, the early Christians set themselves. Justin Martyr, Minucius Felix, Lactantius and Tertullian, protest against these atrocities with burning indignation. In his "Address to the Nations," Tertullian says, "Although you are forbidden by the laws to slay new-born infants, it so happens that no laws are evaded with more impunity or greater safety, with the deliberate knowledge of the public and the suffrages of this entire age." The ancient world gave to infants no protection, when from any cause the parent was not willing to make provision for the child; while the marriage relation in both Greek and Roman civilization was "a political institution whose chief function was the service of the State in producing citizens."

#### APOSTOLIC CHRISTIANITY AND THE CHILD

Christianity introduced a new appreciation of the child. The teachings of Jesus gave to infants a new valuation, based upon what the child was, as well as upon what he might become. About children was flung the Ægis of the strong Son of God. Mother-love, crushed by the current conception of the place and function of womanhood, bounded with joy; and the Magnificat, the singing of which followed fast the Gospel, told of the redemp-

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tion of woman from her former degradation. Woman was emancipated and given spiritual equality with man; and now her offspring possessed a worth infinitely more than that of future citizens of an earthly State, for Christian faith saw in the little child a future citizen of the heavenly Kingdom.

The Gospel, preached in the days of the Apostles, called those who heard to repentance and faith in Jesus, as the Christ whom God had raised from the dead, and to those who thus believed in Christ He became their Lord. Such a message made its appeal only to those who were able to understand and to believe: "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." The acceptance of this message produced such transforming results that all who believed became joyful witnesses to the regenerating power of the Gospel. Christianity spread as news spreads, and within a century after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, churches were found in well-nigh every land of the then known world. The age was one of religious ferment. The Greek spirit was under the sway of the philosophies and the theosophies of the East. Persian, Egyptian, Babylonian, Greek and Jewish cults had gained their followers in all the great centres of population within the Roman Empire, while the current belief held by tolerant and inquiring minds was that some truth could be found in all of these various religions. Eclecticism was the prevailing philosophy. These conditions were destined to recast Christian-

ity and to completely transform the requirements of church-membership, and in no respect were the innovations so important to the future as in the changed attitude towards childhood.

#### THE BELIEF IN THE EFFICACY OF RELIGIOUS FORMS

Among all people there existed at the beginning of the Christian era the belief in the efficacy of religious forms. Jewish proselytes were received into full Jewish fellowship by a baptism, which, according to the current belief, changed the Gentile into a Jew; and granted him all the benefits and blessings that came to those of Abrahamic descent. The immersion of proselytes, which antedates the baptism of John, produced a new racial relationship. The Roman world was familiar with the Eleusinian mysteries and the initiative ceremonies connected with the worship of Mythra, Osiris, Adonis, and the Great Mother of Pessinus. The age fervently and unquestioningly believed in the magical effects which these rites were supposed to produce. In these initiations, the candidates passed through experiences which represented and were assumed to reproduce the adventures of the gods. "Each of these cults," says the distinguished Catholic Modernist, Alfred Loisy, "was a system of salvation which a god was supposed to have instituted at the beginning, either by his own will or by the simple fact of his example and the lot which had befallen him. These religions were addressed

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to individuals and they were addressed to all without distinction; for they had lost their national character and had no other object than that of achieving the happiness of man.”<sup>1</sup>

The forms of every religion were expected to produce mysterious and magical results, and heathen converts, accepting the Gospel, carried over these opinions, and they naturally sought to discover in the forms of the Christian faith magical effects greater than those of the prevailing cults. To this presupposition, we are able to trace the origin of the infant baptism. It is easy to see how “the analogue of the evangelic data and the primitive Christian rite,” continues Loisy, “with the belief and customs of the mysteries determined under the circumstances the fusion of the one with the other.”

Into this age came the Gospel, affirming the reality of the spiritual world, the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the competency of the human soul to relate itself to God through faith in Jesus Christ. The fundamental fact, which from the human side marks the genesis of the Christian life, is always that interior, voluntary act of the soul, which because of its twofold aspect we call “repentance and faith.” The ordinances of the New Testament were symbols, setting forth this experience of the soul, and the fundamental principle of apostolic faith was “the religious experience must precede its expression, and the religious expression must

<sup>1</sup> *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. X, p. 49.

follow and be in harmony with the experience." The religious experience of the individual possessed the highest value, because all religious forms waited upon this experience. The new birth was the initial experience and in baptism—a burial in and a resurrection from water—this experience, beginning with a death in sin followed by a resurrection to walk in newness of life, was accurately and impressively portrayed.

Coming into contact with the heathenish conceptions regarding the efficacy of religious forms, the second century Christian surrendered the life-giving content of the Gospel, in order that he might endow these forms of the Christian religion with a fictitious, magical power. The forms of the Apostolic ordinances were preserved and for the letter, the shadow and the mockery, there was given up the spirit, the substance and the very life of Christianity itself.

### THE TEMPTATIONS OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Every young enthusiast, conscious of his untried powers, confident that his career is to be the realization of some noble mission, dreaming of the world-wide acceptance of his ideas and ideals, must pass through the three temptations which came to Jesus in the wilderness. The same temptations come under like conditions to the social organization, which is simply the collective mind of those individuals who compose it. When these temptations assail the local church, the denomination or

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the great division of Christendom, a crisis arises, and if the organization succumbs, it marks a turning point in which its noble purposes are prostituted to ignoble ends; Jesus Christ is again betrayed, and an unholy alliance is formed for the overthrow of the Gospel which Jesus brought to men. Such a crisis came in the second century to the early Christian churches.

### SACRAMENTALISM

To Jesus, after forty days of fasting, came the suggestion that He change the loaf-like stones into bread. To the Christians of the second century came the suggestion—and the atmosphere of their thought-world made it inevitable that this suggestion should come,—that those dead in sin should be quickened into life through the rite of baptism, the laver of regeneration. Jesus resisted the temptation to use His miracle-working power to satisfy physical needs, and affirmed the regnancy of the spiritual life: “It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” The early churches, however, did not follow the example of Jesus, but took over the heathen idea of the magical efficacy of forms, and declared that the church could do more than change stones into bread; that through baptism actual sin was blotted out, that he who was baptized was made thereby a child of God, being born into the grace of God, and, therefore, an heir of heaven. With the acceptance of bap-

tismal regeneration, conscious faith on the part of the recipient became non-essential. The Gospel was no longer the power of God unto salvation. The Evangelical principle almost disappeared, and sacramentalism, the first great division in anti-evangelical theology, became the orthodox teaching of the early churches.

### SENTIMENTALISM

Standing upon the pinnacle of the Temple, surveying the multitude below, the tempter suggested to Jesus that, relying on the promised care of God, He should fling Himself from the great height, and supported by the angels, appear before the people, who would undoubtedly welcome Him as their Messiah. Such a dramatic sensational appearance would convince the wonder-loving multitude and would meet every demand of current Hebrew feeling. Such a manifestation would have been an adaptation to the sign-seeking sentimentalism of the Jewish people, an adjustment to the presuppositions and expectancies of the age. The program carried with it the demand that God should adapt Himself and coöperate with this spectacular appearance as the divine means for establishing His Kingdom on earth. It eliminated all effort to discover the will of God and to carry out in loving obedience the plan of God. It presented a program opposed to God's law of growth—a law universal throughout the domain of life. Jesus was a patriot, and the longing to win Jeru-

saalem and the realization of His failure following the revealed plan of God, leads Him later, when the multitudes are shouting "Hosanna," to break forth in sobs and bitter wailing. But Jesus could not compromise with the sentimentalism of His age, and quick and ringing sound His words, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

The early churches on the other hand, seeking to win the world, studying the currents of thought, sensing the sentiments of the multitude, learning the motives which would attract the masses to Christianity, sought to adjust in every possible way their policies and their practices to the pre-suppositions and the demands of the people. Baptism was decked out with many mysterious ceremonies; a gorgeous service was held in the churches like Temples, so that the heathens declared such worship sublime and edifying. Christian scholars endeavoured to reconcile Greek philosophy and Christian teaching. But the most important submission to the prevailing sentimentalism was the introduction of infant baptism. The belief in the sacramental benefit in baptism, together with the emergence of the doctrine of original sin, created the demand on the part of Christian mothers that their little children should receive all the benefits that came through Christian baptism. Still there were many who held with Aristides the view which he expressed in his "Apology": "And when a child is born to any one of them, they praise God; again if it chance

to die in its infancy, they praise God mightily as if for one who has passed through the world without sins." But the development of the doctrine of original sin and its final formulation by Augustine furnished a doctrinal basis and infant baptism became the prevailing usage. The Gospel was no longer needed; the evangelical principle wholly disappeared, and sentimentalism triumphed.

Dr. George Hodge, Dean of the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, Massachusetts, says in his recent book, "The Training of Children in Religion," "The normal rite of initiation into the membership of the Christian Church is the sacrament of baptism. This was originally intended for adult persons. . . . The extension of this privilege to children was in defiance of both tradition and authority. . . . The baptism of infants became the common custom of the church quite apart from any interpretation of the New Testament, and against the will of strict ecclesiastical authority, at the demand of affection, because the fathers and mothers wanted it." Dr. Hodge says further that infant baptism has successfully resisted all the unanswerable arguments which are based upon the reading of the Scriptures, and that "the logic of human affection sets at nought the reasoning of the commentators." Thus it is seen that even those who practice infant baptism now recognize its origin to have been parental sentimentalism.

## SACERDOTALISM

Again, Jesus stands upon an exceedingly high mountain. The Tempter shows Him the kingdoms of the world and offers them to Him upon the condition that Jesus simply recognize his Satanic claims. With burning indignation, Jesus answers: "Get thee behind Me, Satan, for it is written, 'thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.'" A like temptation came to the so-called holy Catholic Church, now an ecclesiastical body, presenting itself as a league of independent communities, spanning the Roman Empire from end to end. Alexandria, Edessa, Carthage and Rome had become great centres of Christian influence. "The churches of Egypt, Lybia, Pentapolis," says Harnack, "formed a single whole. The churches of Palestine, Syria and Eastern Asia Minor entered into close alliance; the churches of Greece and Western Asia Minor were united, and in the West there were four great church sodalities, Italy, Africa, Spain and Gaul. These seven or eight great societies stood together in coalition, and had, on the whole, the same rules and regulations, and possessed in the Episcopal constitution a more effective organization than any society had ever possessed before."<sup>1</sup> The ancient church had become a "syncretistic" religion, admirably adapted to the mental attitude of the heathen.

To this great organization there came the temptation to extend its sway over all kingdoms

<sup>1</sup> *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. X, p. 66.

of the world. The alliance with the State intensified the greed of power on the part of the rapidly developing hierarchy. With the rise of the priesthood, the Lord's Supper became the Mass; the Presbyter the Sacerdos, and the Church declared that she had the dread and mysterious power of making God gracious or unchaining His wrath. The legend of Peter gave the Bishop of Rome a theory on which to base his claim of supremacy, and thus the Roman Pontiff became the successor to all the powers, formerly held by the Emperors of the Roman Empire. Sacerdotalism triumphed and the Roman Church went forth to possess the kingdoms of the world.

### THE ROMAN CHURCH AND THE CHILD

Sacramentalism, sentimentalism, and sacerdotalism, the arch enemies of the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ, have dominated Christendom for over fifteen centuries. The wonder is that the Gospel has not perished. Sacramentalism made faith unnecessary; sentimentalism crowded the religious life with rites, observances and heathenish reverberations; while sacerdotalism built up an institution that brought into subjection all the institutions of society—the Home, the School, the State, and the whole of civilization. The holiest of human aspirations were degraded to an idolatry in which every phase was unchristian save the name. The beautiful symbolism of early Christianity was made the vehicle for the spread of superstitious conceptions of ancient myths

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and mysteries. A despotic power was brought into existence, which held in its relentless grasp the whole civilized world for over a thousand years.

Do you seek to understand how such a stupendous and astounding tyranny could be perpetuated through a period of fifteen centuries, and should to-day sceptre with despotic hand two hundred and sixty millions of men? The secret is revealed when you come to appreciate the care, the faithfulness, the superb skill, the rare psychological insight which the Roman Church has shown in guarding and training little children. By controlling completely the environment of the expanding mind of the little child, and where this is not possible by guarding and controlling with the greatest solicitude his religious education, the Church of Rome has held, and in this democratic age still holds, under her sway more than one-half of all on earth who bear the name of Christ. The oft-quoted challenge of Francis Xavier, "Give me the child until he is seven years of age, and I care not who has him thereafter," is safely made. The attitude of the Church is expressed in the words of one of the leading Bishops of the Roman Church, who a few days ago said to me, "We are zealous in the care of the child; *it is our duty.*"

Nearly all the religious organizations of Christendom reveal somewhere in their creeds, their forms or their polity, a trace of sacramentalism, sentimentalism and sacerdotalism. But the one religious body which had made these anti-Christian elements the

dominating factors in her organization, and has gone to the extreme logical consequences which the acceptance of these elements require and has been able to maintain these radical positions uncompromisingly, is the Roman Catholic Church. And the reason this Church is able to stand unmoved when all the currents of modern life are setting against her is due to her confidence in the system of religious instruction which she gives to the young. Therefore, a closer study of the Roman Catholic methods in training the child, both from a pedagogical as well as historical view-point, is not only admissible, but highly desirable.

#### THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC INFANT

In Catholic countries where the Church is supreme but little attention is given directly to the religious education of children, and confirmation often follows immediately the baptism of the infant; this prevails in Mexico and other countries. But in the countries where Protestantism is in the ascendancy, the Roman Church provides a course of instruction, based upon sound psychological principles which extend over a number of years. Confirmation, which marks the completion of the training, is postponed in this country until the child is about twelve years of age; in order that he may be thoroughly grounded in Romish doctrines, and furthermore that he may be kept the longer in the parochial school.

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The religious education of the Catholic child begins with birth. Before he can differentiate the various sensations that come pouring into his nascent mind, the child is taken to the parish church where, with impressive ceremonies, he is baptized, and, according to the teaching of the Church, he is "born again into the grace of God and becomes a Christian." The parents are taught that while they are the earthly parents, God is the heavenly parent of the child, and while the child is theirs to rear, he belongs primarily to God and the Church. He must be taught as early as possible to make the sign of the cross.

In the home of a pious Catholic, the child will witness daily acts of devotion. The mother on waking makes the sign of the cross, and utters a short prayer, usually, "My God, I give Thee my heart and my soul." Upon dressing, she kneels reverently before "some holy image" and says devoutly: "I adore Thee, my God, and love Thee with all my heart; I thank Thee for having created me, for having made me a Christian and for having preserved me this night; I offer Thee all my actions and I pray Thee to preserve this day from sin and keep me from evil, Amen!"

Then comes the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary and the Hail Holy Queen: "Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we come, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn thee, blest Gracious Advocate, thine

eyes of mercy towards us and after this exile show us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O Clement, O Pious, O Sweet Virgin Mary." Then follows the Apostles' Creed, a series of prayers called Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity, and the Angelus, which closes with the words: "Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that as we have known the incarnation of Christ, The Son, by the message of an angel, so by His Passion and Cross we may be brought to the glory of His resurrection, through the same Christ, Our Lord, Amen."

Before each meal he will see the members of the family standing, making the sign of the cross, followed by these words: "Lord God, bless me and this food which I am about to take to sustain me in Thy service," and after the meal, the sign of the cross and the following prayer: "Lord, I thank Thee for the food which Thou hast given me; make me worthy to partake of the heavenly feast."

At night, he again sees his mother kneeling, her lips moving, as she offers the same prayers as in the morning, adding one requesting forgiveness for the sins of the day.

When the child attends the church he beholds the imposing structure and entering, he is deeply impressed by the high altar with its candles, the dim religious light, the solemn silence and the strange and awe-inspiring statues of the Christ, the Virgin and the Saints, the stations of the cross, the solemn dramatic service full of mystery, the deep-toned organ, the chanting of the priest, the responses of

the congregation, and an ineffaceable impression has been made.

At the earliest period possible, he is taught to make the sign of the cross, to kneel and recite "Our Father," "Hail Mary" and the "Apostles' Creed," and later the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity. He is sent to the parochial school, where the days begin and end with the making of the sign of the cross. His environment is charged with suggestions that make for the reverential acceptance of the Church as his spiritual guide and Holy Mother.

#### IMITATION IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

"The credulity and truthfulness of children," says Prof. E. A. Kirkpatrick in "The Fundamentals of Child Study," "and their dramatic and symbolic tendencies during the period of childhood, make it possible to impart to them *the forms of any religion*." These attitudes of the child—credulity, trustfulness, tendencies to dramatic and symbolic action, contribute to persistent imitation—the most important factor in the mental development of the child. It is through persistent imitation that the child acquires an understanding of speech, the use of words, the ability to speak, to read, to write and to play upon musical instruments. And it is the theory of the Catholics and of the majority of the Protestants also, that religion for the growing child is grounded in the sacraments and is completed by persistent imitation or education. Here

we face the supreme, the crucial question in the study of the religious development of the child, and so far as evangelical Christianity is concerned, the greatest question since the Reformation, and possibly greatest since the falling away of the early Church.

It is evident that the religion which provides forms most easily imitated is the one best adapted to influence the child mind. Before the power of judgment is developed or the child is capable of making an intelligent decision, he can acquire lasting religious impressions through observing and taking part in various religious activities, the meaning of which he only imperfectly understands. The ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church in which children at stated times participate—the genuflections, the counting of beads, the frequent making of the sign of the cross, the participation in processions—produce impressions that can never be obliterated. Before the child is able to form any clear conceptions regarding the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, the bent of his mind has been fixed and the direction of his life religiously has been determined.

#### CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION

In the Roman Catholic Church, the catechetical method is used—a method dating back to the second century, and which by the Alexandrian School was extended so as to cover three years of study. The catechism has stood the test of the ages. For

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children no better method of religious instruction can be evolved. But the questions should be framed so that memory-work and action, audible symbols and dramatic representations shall be combined. The more of bodily movement demanded, the more of visible and imitable action presented, the more immediate is the effect and the more lasting is the impression produced. This is admirably illustrated in the catechism prepared by the present Pope, Pius X, and now being used in the diocese of Tennessee. It begins with the words, "Make the sign of the cross," which the child does, repeating, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." This method continues *pari passu* throughout the catechetical process until there has been wrought into the structure both of body and of the mind the religious forms and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church.

This work is carried on in the parochial school or the Sunday-school by nuns and monastics, who devote themselves to the training of the young: "The Principal Truths of our Holy Faith," "The Principal Part of our Doctrine," "Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity and Contrition," "God," "The Commandments," "The Precepts of the Church," "Sin," "The Sacraments," baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, unction, holy orders, and matrimony, "Faith," "Hope," and "Charity" are the subjects presented in the catechism now used in our American Catholic Churches. "Sometimes the catechisms are stimulated by marks, ranks, prizes, exami-

nations and charts, the bell and the blackboard and the vast repertory of the many thousand lives of the saints.”<sup>1</sup>

#### PREPARATION FOR CONFIRMATION

The central theme of catechetical inculcation and also of the early influences of the Church is sin and the divine and human instrumentalities by which its results are removed. Confirmation is a renewal by the children of the vows made for them in infancy at baptism. Preceding the rite of confirmation comes the “retreat” by which children are withdrawn into the sanctuary of the soul, and which seeks for a season of from two to four or five days to snatch them from the outward life and from the association with other children, to bring them face to face with God and self, and to impress them with the sense that something serious and momentous is transpiring within. The catechism has been learned and the soul is tender and ripe for the deepest impressions as never before or after. The children devote the best part of the morning, afternoon and evening to receiving the strongest impressions of sin, death, salvation and judgment.

“They are told that Jesus is now passing, knocking at their hearts, nearer than ever before or after, that they must choose between good and evil and declare in their hearts eternal war with sin.”<sup>2</sup> The exercises begin on Sunday and continue until

<sup>1</sup> Hall : “ Adolescence,” p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268.

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Thursday—the confirmation day. The passion of Christ is made objective, impressive and vivid. On Tuesday afternoon, the crucifix is draped in black, the appeals grow in earnestness and pathos; with tears and solemn warnings, the director urges their penitence, that their hearts may be really humbled, broken and contrite. Absolution is bestowed, past sins are pardoned, while just before the ceremony of confirmation each child makes a general confession of sin. Then follows the imposing and deeply impressive ceremony; the bishop, wearing the miter or duplex crown, the mozetta, the tunic, the stole, the cope, carrying the crozier or pastoral staff, lays aside his miter and turning from the altar raises his hand in benediction.

After explaining the nature of the sacrament, he prays for the descent of the Holy Spirit, that He may rest upon the confirmed as at Pentecost with boundless fullness of gifts. Approaching the children, the bishop anoints each in the form of the cross to indicate that he must “openly profess and practice this faith, never to be ashamed of it and die rather than deny it,” saying, “*Signo te signo crucis, te confirmo te chrismate salutis, in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti.*” The confirmation concludes with high mass, the children for the first time partaking of the eucharist. The children are now led from the church where their waiting parents embrace them with tears and rejoicings.

The children are, through the long years of training leading up to this solemn hour, bound to the

Church so that their bodily movements, their modes of thought, their conceptions of life and religion all reveal the control and the sovereign will of the Roman Catholic Church. The child has subjected his soul to the despotic orders of the Papal King, and he, though born in free democratic America, is ready to obey the Roman Pontiff, even when he says: "In the matter of thinking, it is necessary for the Catholic believer to embrace and firmly hold all that the Roman Pontiffs have transmitted or yet shall transmit, and to make public profession of the same as often as circumstances make necessary. Especially, and in particular, in what is known as 'modern liberties,' he must abide by the judgment of the Apostolic See, and each believer is to believe thereupon what the Holy See itself thinks."<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the child's education, secular and religious, is to make him an unquestioning, devoted servitor of the Church, and like the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome, the function of woman is to furnish citizens, in this instance, for the preservation of a despotic, ecclesiastical kingdom. In method, in the materials used, in faithfulness to the task, there has been a marked development; but the governing principle, the selfish interest of the institution, remains the same.

#### EPISCOPAL AND LUTHERAN CONFIRMATION

Among the evangelical denominations who practice infant baptism, the Episcopal and the Lutheran

<sup>1</sup> Encyclical of Leo XIII, 1885.

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Churches teeter from baptismal regeneration to a distinct evangelical conversion. In the Episcopal Church "the baptized child is accepted as a member of the ecclesiastical family, potentially regenerate; the catechism is not a matter of special class instruction, but it is taught in the Sunday-school; it is the tradition, and so the expectation, that the child will come forward in adolescence to prove his knowledge of the catechism in the confirmation class; instead of waiting for a cataclysmal conversion and a Christian experience before admitting the child into full communion, the child is admitted upon attaining a fitting age and reasonable knowledge of the catechism; and it is believed that in the solemn interim between the confirmation and the first communion, in the activities that follow or in the fold of the church with maturing character, spiritual life will actually appear. As far as the influence of this plan can be thrown about children, what could be more admirably planned to secure a quiet normal Christian development and a minimum of loss of children in their growth from one period to another of life."<sup>1</sup>

Commenting upon the above, Professor Weigle, a leading Lutheran scholar, in his admirable textbook for Sunday-school workers, entitled "The Pupil and the Teacher," says concerning Lutheran children: "The baptized child is accepted as a member of the church, and looked upon as already the subject of divine regeneration—'received,' as

<sup>1</sup> Forbush: "The Boy Problem," p. 119.

the Augsburg Confession so finely puts it, 'into the grace of God.' He is taught the simplest truths of the catechism from his earliest years, and is made to look forward to the day when he can take upon his own shoulders the promises made for him by his parents, and so become a communicant member of the church. No sudden conversion or emotional experience is made a condition of confirmation; the simple act of will is accepted if examination shows that he understands the step he is taking. And Christian nurture does not cease then, but the youth is helped to 'grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.'"<sup>1</sup>

#### THE DANGER IN CONFIRMATION

The confirmation of children at the adolescent age has, from the psychological standpoint, much in its favour. The history of initiations at puberty involving religious elements dates back to time immemorial. Confirmation takes place during the great conversion period. But confirmation without personal faith brings into the fellowship of the church those who have no right there and the institution wrongs itself and all whom it so admits; the wrong grows out of a misconception of the relation which the church sustains to the child. The function of the church as an institution in educating the child is to impress upon him authority, only to make possible his spiritual autonomy; obedience is demanded only that there may be

<sup>1</sup> Weigle: "The Pupil and the Teacher," pp. 233-4.

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brought into being personal freedom. The pedagogical mission of the church is to bring the child into the presence of Jesus Christ and to introduce him to Jesus in such a way that the child may feel what we feel; the magnetism, the moral beauty, the trustworthiness, and the forgiving love of our Lord. This position is founded on the conviction that God has wrought His purpose into the processes of mental growth and that the child is predestinated to be a seeker after God, and that our task is to so aid him in the quest that at the earliest possible moment, when the yearning for God arises in its soul, we may be in a position to point out the way that leads to a personal discovery of God in Jesus Christ.

The child has inherited tendencies to sin, just as he inherits tendencies to disease and tendencies to error, and we do not expect to find at any point in the development of the child proof of his moral perfection, until we discover at an earlier period physical and mental perfection. We do not, therefore, expect the child endowed with certain tendencies towards evil, and developing within a social environment shot through with evil, to be when his moral life develops other than a sinner, and for this reason we undertake as soon as the child is aware of his own sinfulness to make clear and simple the way of salvation and to lead him to his Saviour. The child is our chief concern, and he imposes upon us our greatest responsibility. The interests of the institution are secondary to the interests of the child.

## THE RIGHT RELATION OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE CHILD

Appreciating the faithfulness of those who represent the Roman Catholic Church, admiring them for their wisdom and psychological insight in educating the child, applauding them for courage that they display at a time when all the currents of life are setting against them; we cannot blind our eyes to the solemn and distressing fact that the Roman Catholic Church not only is limiting the freedom, and, therefore, the opportunity for religious development of all who come under its influence, but that the Church, seeking to control the institutions of society, the Home, the School, the State, as well as the Church, is endeavouring to make all the forces of civilization subservient to her selfish designs. The power and the marvellous success of the Roman Catholic Church in training the child is the peril of modern civilization; for by her training, all free institutions are put in jeopardy. And the danger to evangelical religion from the liturgical churches, doctrinally closely allied with the Roman Church, varies with the elevation and the authority given the Church as an institution. So far as the interests of the institution take precedence over the interests of the individual, so far the verities of the Christian faith are threatened.

The institution, whether it be the Church, the Sabbath, or any other, was made for man and not man for the institution. The institution is never an end in itself, but the individual is always an end

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in himself. The effort to preserve religious institutions at the expense of the rights of man is the originating cause of the departure from Christian truth throughout history. The only Christian institution which has the right to exist is one whose relation to the child and to all mankind is that of humble service. The institution was made for the child and not the child for the institution.

## VII

### THE TEACHERS OF THE CHILD

**A**MONG the delightful experiences of the past year was the meeting with Dr. Edward Judson, who came to Nashville to deliver a course of lectures at Vanderbilt University. He is a rare and royal personality, of unusual charm and winsomeness. For a quarter of a century he has stood in America's greatest city where the seething social currents converge against our evangelical faith, and he has shown there the courage and the tenacity of his honoured father, America's first foreign missionary, Adoniram Judson. One of his striking sentences, uttered in Nashville, was the following: "It is sometimes said that even a child can be converted; it should be said that even a grown person can be. The nearer the cradle, as the rule, the nearer Christ." Comparing conversion to the crossing of a stream that widens and deepens as the child grows older, while near its source it is easy to cross, Dr. Judson said: "One step will take you across, and you may even pass from bank to bank without knowing it." It is a vitally necessary step, yet under some circumstances the taking of the step is done so easily, so quietly, so naturally, that in later years no trace seems to have been left in memory.

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It is thus possible for one to pass from bank to bank and memory fail to indelibly impress the fact, but we maintain with all the earnestness and vigour of those who contend for a principle which they know to be vital that the stream must be crossed and voluntarily crossed, though the memory of its crossing may be forgotten. The crossing of another stream marked the beginning of our intellectual life and none of us are able to recall the crossing. Few, if any, can recall the crossing of the stream which marked the genesis of our moral life. Most of us do recall our Christian conversion, for the time of our crossing occurred after the memory had reached its most active period. Yet it may be that there are some here who crossed the stream so quietly and at such an early age that memory does not record when or where the notable event occurred. Such an experience takes place only when the environment of the child is charged with suggestions which make easy the acceptance of Christ.

The important organized factors in the religious training of the child are the Home, the Sunday-school, the Church, and the Christian Community.

### THE HOME

This is an age of specialization. Professor Ross says in "Sin and Society": "Under our present manner of living, how many of my vital interests I must lend to others! Nowadays the water main is my well, the trolley car is my carriage, the banker's

safe is my old stocking, the policeman's billy my fist. I let the meat trust butcher my pig, the oil trust mould my candles, the sugar trust boil my sorghum, the coal trust chop my wood, and the barbed wire company split my rails." <sup>1</sup> The modern father has caught the spirit of the twentieth century. He has syndicated his parental responsibilities. The wife is made the head of the home department, charged with all its domestic and religious responsibilities, not the least of which is the care of the children. The city is made the head of the educational department, and the board of education whom he has never seen selects teachers, of whom he has never heard, to train the minds of his children. The church is made the head of the religious department, and the transfer too often bears the signature of the wife also, and teachers, whose belief he does not know, teach a Book which he now never reads. The father retains one department—the financial, and the only interest apparently that he has in the other departments is to reduce their expenditures.

Frank Stockton was accustomed to say that there was as much family government in the world as there ever was only it had changed hands. The father to-day does not want to be President of the United State and the ruler of the family ; he prefers to be simply the Secretary of the Treasury ; a Cabinet officer rather than the Chief Executive. But no preference of his can change the Scriptural

<sup>1</sup> "Sin and Society," p. 3.

order. He is the head of the house and upon him rests the responsibility of ruling his household and ordering the religious life of those who gather about his board. Unto him these words were addressed regarding the commandments, statutes and judgments given to Israel: "Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up."<sup>1</sup>

Some of us recall the visit twelve years ago to this institution of John G. Paton, whose apostolic labours rightfully won for him the title of the Apostle of the New Hebrides. In his autobiography, he unbare the secret influences of his early religious life. After recounting his father's conversion, he tells of the establishing of the family altar. Dr. Paton continues: "And so began that blessed custom of Family Prayer, morning and evening, which my father practiced probably without one single omission till he lay on his death-bed, seventy-seven years of age; when, even to the last day of his life, a portion of Scriptures was read, and his voice was heard softly joining in the Psalm, and his lips breathed the morning and evening prayers, falling in sweet benediction on the hearts of all his children, far away many of them over all the earth, but all meeting him there at the Throne of Grace."<sup>2</sup>

Instinctively the mind turns to that immortal poem of Burns, "The Cotter's Saturday Night":

<sup>1</sup> Deut. vi. 7.      <sup>2</sup> John G. Paton: "An Autobiography," p. 21.

“The priestlike father reads the sacred page,  
How Abraham was the friend of God on high ;  
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage  
With Amelek’s ungracious progeny ;  
Or with the royal bard did groaning lie  
Beneath the stroke of Heaven’s avenging ire ;  
Or Job’s pathetic plaint and wailing cry ;  
Or rapt Isaiah’s wild seraphic fire ;  
Or other holy seers that tuned the sacred lyre.”

And the heart-moving portrait received its crown-  
ing touch when,—

“Kneeling down to Heaven’s eternal king,  
The saint, the father, and the husband prays.”

Dr. Paton relates how Sunday was spent in his childhood home: “We had, too, special Bible Readings on the Lord’s Day evening,—mother and children and visitors reading in turns, with fresh and interesting question, answer and exposition, all tending to impress us with the infinite grace of a God of love and mercy in the great gift of His dear Son Jesus, our Saviour. The Shorter Catechism was gone through regularly, each answering the question asked till the whole had been explained, and its foundation in Scripture had been shown and proof text adduced. It has been an amazing thing to me occasionally to meet with men who blamed this ‘catechizing’ for giving them a distaste to religion ; every one in all our circle thinks and feels exactly the opposite. It laid the solid rock-foundation for our religious life.

“Our home consisted of a ‘but,’ a ‘ben’ and a ‘mid-room,’ or chamber called the ‘closet.’ The ‘closet’ was a very small apartment betwixt the other two, having room only for a bed, a little table and a chair, with a diminutive window shedding diminutive light on the scene. Thither daily, and oftentimes a day, generally after each meal, we saw our father retire, and ‘shut the door’; and we children got to understand by a sort of spiritual instinct (for the thing was too sacred to be talked about) that prayers were being poured out there for us, as of old by the High Priest within the veil in the Most Holy Place. We occasionally heard the pathetic echoes of a trembling voice pleading as if for life, and learned to slip out and in past that door on tiptoe, not to disturb the holy colloquy. The outside world might not know, but we knew, whence came that happy light as of a new-born smile that always was dawning on our father’s face. It was a reflection from the Divine Presence, in the consciousness of which he lived. Never, in the temple or cathedral, on mountain or in glen, can I hope to feel that the Lord God is more near, more visibly talking and walking with men, than under that humble cottage roof of thatch and oaken wattles. Though everything else in religion were by some unthinkable catastrophe to be swept out of memory, or blotted from our understanding, my soul would wander back to those early scenes, and shut itself up once again in that Sanctuary closet, and, hearing still the echoes of those cries to God,

would hurl back all doubt with the victorious appeal, 'He walked with God, why may not I?'<sup>1</sup>

I have introduced this rather long quotation for the purpose of emphasizing the place of the father in the early religious training of the child and in the effect of the precepts and teaching given by such a Christian father upon the growing children of his household. It is a matter greatly to be deplored that such fathers are growing rarer, and as they grow rarer, such lives as John G. Paton will appear less frequently in our religious history.

One of the praiseworthy movements of our times is the Family Altar League which seeks to restore family worship in Christian homes. The covenant which those assume who enroll themselves as members of this League is as follows: "Believing myself to be largely responsible for the eternal salvation and the religious training of my children, and realizing the need of the grace of God for my own Christian life, I covenant with God to make it the rule of my life to gather together each day, as far as possible, the members of my family, and read some portion of God's Word and pray for His blessings upon my home." Every child born into this world has the right to the ineffaceable impressions which come from seeing his parents and his elders engage in family prayer, and where it is not done, there is denied to the child something of inestimable value.

My earliest recollections are associated with fam-

<sup>1</sup> John G. Paton: "An Autobiography," pp. 10-12.

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ily prayer. I see gathered about the open fire "the household, upon whose faces the firelight paled and shone." The recess by the mantel was made for and fitted to the dimensions of the Family Bible. I hear my father reading, and then a movement as the chairs are pushed back and we all kneel to pray; and to this day whenever I hear the scraping of a chair upon an old oaken floor, a thrill is sent through me. God has never been more vividly real to me than He was when we gathered about the family altar in the years long ago.

Permit me to speak further regarding my personal experience. My aged grandfather, a strong, stern Presbyterian, filled the most important place in my early religious training, and yet he died when I was seven years of age. He was my first playmate and he stood between me and many a merited punishment. I remember that when the summer clouds grew sullen and the roll of thunder told us of the approach of storm, he and I were accustomed to take our places on the front porch of the country home, and as the storm grew in violence, my grandfather would read from the Psalms, and above the roar of the wind and the peals of thunder rose the sublime, majestic words that tell of Him who rides upon the storm. The great trees that lined the avenue leading up to the house would bend beneath the fury of the wind, and often we would be driven by the terrific downpour to a corner of the porch sheltered by honeysuckle vines, and there the reading of the glorious poetry

of David would be continued. I can hear his voice as he cries above the roar of the storm, "Bow down Thine ear, O Lord, and hear me, for I am poor and needy"—the eighty-sixth—his favourite Psalm. At the time when my child-mind was most susceptible to nature, its wonder, its mystery, its resistless powers, its indescribable beauty and charm, my grandfather led me to discover God manifest throughout the whole cosmic process, and Nature has never been to me other than the revelation of God.

Horace Bushnell has said, "More can be done or lost by neglect of doing for the child's immortality in the first three years of his life than in all his years of discipline afterwards." I am not prepared to say whether or not this statement is altogether true, but even if it only approximates the truth, and certainly that much can be said for it, the greatest responsibility rests upon those who influence the very little children, and upon no one is the responsibility so great as upon the mother, who during this period is, or should be, the child's constant companion. Before he knows the meaning of prayer, his eyes should have grown familiar to beholding his mother kneel and seeing her lips move in prayer. Teaching the little child to pray should be preceded by the child seeing his mother at prayer. The songs of the nursery should have in them the note of reverence and should tell of the loving care of God.

How thankful are we, O men, called to be prophets of God in this trying age, for the early

memories of the tender and faithful care of Christian mothers. No stories are half so sweet or so fascinating as those she told us, and they were all stories of the Bible. I mark the beginning of my personal religious experience to that day when, passing my mother's room, I heard her tremulous voice broken with sobs. I was then only seven years of age. As I listened eagerly at the door, I heard my mother praying for me. She told God of my disobedience and waywardness, and never before had I realized that my wrong-doing was sin against God. She prayed for strength and wisdom to rear her little boy; and it seemed to me that, as I listened, I was breaking her heart, and certainly her prayer broke my little heart. I was soundly convicted of sin by my mother's prayer. Then followed three long years in which I was a seeker after salvation. There was no peace in my heart and I dared not reveal the secret of my soul to any living being.

One night my grandfather, my father's father, a great preacher in his day, preached upon the "exceeding sinfulness of sin," and something happened—I laid hold on Him who, through these years, had been laying hold on me. I transferred to Him the control of my life, and Jesus Christ from that day has been my Master. Now as I look back over the years of my early life, the great fear I have is that I shall not be able to do for the children I influence what was done for me. Greater than the Sunday-school, greater than the Church, is the influence of

the Christian home in the Christian development of the child.

### THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL

No people of ancient times emphasized religious education and careful religious nurture as did the ancient Hebrews. The Synagogue school in the time of Jesus was graded ; the primary grade, ranging in age from five to ten, memorized selected portions of Scripture ; the intermediate grade, ranging in age from ten to fifteen, studied the Scripture text and commentaries prepared by the Jewish Rabbis. The adult grade, made up of those fifteen and over, engaged in the discussions of the current questions of theology.

With the establishing of Christianity, there came the demand for a distinctly Christian education. This led to the adoption of the catechetical method and the planting of catechetical schools. This method the Roman Catholics claim to have followed from their earliest history to the present time. Martin Luther prepared for the schools he established all over Germany the Shorter and the Longer Catechisms. John Calvin adopted the same plan. The Westminster Divines, who formulated the Westminster Confession, also produced the Shorter and the Larger Catechisms, both of which are still in use. The Methodists and Baptists inaugurated this method a century and a half ago. It is to be deplored that the catechism holds no longer its proper place in the religious education of modern

evangelicals. John Owen says: "More knowledge is ordinarily diffused, and especially among the young and ignorant, by one hour's catechetical exercise than by many hours' continual discourse."

There is a period in the mental development of the child when his memory is more active, more retentive than ever afterwards. From nine to twelve is the golden age of memory, and during this period the catechetical instruction should be given, and the words which embody the simple statement of the profoundest truths of our Christian faith should be fixed permanently in the mind of the child, even though at the time he may not fully apprehend their meaning. Memory is the treasure-house of human experience, the door of which is ever open to the human will. The key of attention unlocks the doors of association and the mind takes out of its treasure-house things new and old. If the child possesses in the treasure-house of memory the great theological and philosophical truths of Christianity, there will come a time when he will need them and when he will seek for and rejoice because the old possesses new meanings and new valuations. However, there is needed in the catechisms which now exist important changes. The questions and answers should to a much greater degree be adapted to the mind of the child. Lord Bacon says: "A boy can preach, but only a man can catechize." And it follows naturally that he who prepares the catechism must be greater and more gifted than he who catechizes.

To the catechetical method there has been added the modern Sunday-school, the history of which was succinctly and admirably given in the course of lectures delivered upon this foundation a year ago by Prof. John R. Sampey, D. D., entitled "The International Lesson System." The Uniform Lesson series have been widely criticized, but in spite of the attacks, this course of study has won the approval of the evangelical world and to-day over twenty-five millions are studying the lessons prepared by the International Committee. The reason for the rapid extension of this series of lessons is traceable to the unexpressed yet evident purpose which has controlled these eminent Biblical scholars in selecting the Scripture for study. This purpose is the presentation of Biblical material in such a way as to give the evangelical principle its proper setting and emphasis. The course of study seeks primarily to secure "the conversion of the pupil and his development in Christian character."

As the agency in bringing about conversion, the Sunday-school, to a large degree, has supplanted the protracted meeting and the revival movement. Outside of the home, the most intimate and most influential religious relation which exists is that of the consecrated teacher and his attentive and responsive pupils. As religion in the home has declined, the influence and the responsibility of the faithful Sunday-school teachers have increased. I delight in dignifying the position of my own teachers. I tell them that they are pastors of

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small congregations, each one in closer touch with his congregation than I with mine, and that their greatest opportunity in life for permanently blessing others and influencing the world is found in the faithful teaching of restless boys and girls. And when any one of their pupils is led to Christ, though it may not be through the direct personal efforts of the teacher, I insist that he shall participate in our joy, as one who has had no small part in leading the child to Christ.

The passion for souls is an essential element in the making of the Sunday-school teacher. Where this passion does not exist, whatever other qualifications he may possess, the teacher should not be allowed to instruct the unsaved. This, however, does not mean that every Sunday he should raise the issue of accepting Christ. We are placing great emphasis to-day upon teacher training and no more than it deserves. Yet I am surprised that so little is said regarding the teacher's most difficult and most important task. Our teachers need to know more thoroughly the Bible; they need to understand the best methods of grading and promotion; they need to master the principles of religious pedagogy and learn how to awaken interest and to secure attention; they need to apprehend the place of apperception in teaching, and to translate their thought in terms which the child can understand; they need to know how to prepare programs for special days and how to increase attendance and to stop the leakage; but the one

thing which every true teacher seeks to know, and in fact the most important thing which he is called upon to know, is nothing other than how to carry on a conversation with that pupil who stands upon the threshold of life's greatest experience.

Why is so little said of personal work? It seems that we come right up to the most important thing in the work of a Sunday-school teacher and then stop. Every Sunday-school Institute should devote one section to "individual work for individuals," the type of evangelistic work, and, I was on the point of saying, the only type of evangelistic work in which a Sunday-school teacher should engage. It is a mistake for a teacher to raise the issue of accepting Christ before the whole class and force the boy or girl then and there to a decision. The probability is that the response will be a refusal. At the very time when the children are feeling the obligation to accept Christ most keenly, they are also most secretive. They feel, and I think rightly, a sense of injustice when they are forced to consider the claims of religion in the presence of others. But often the teacher, who is most zealous in making the public appeal, is dumb when he has the opportunity of speaking alone with the pupil. I am persuaded that every pastor should teach his teachers how to do personal work, and I am further persuaded that our Sunday-school Board should publish quarterlies, certainly a textbook, dealing with its problems and furnishing instructions as to the best methods of work; and

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further, that our Field Secretaries should become specialists in doing personal work and to set on fire the Sunday-schools of the South until every school shall flame with evangelistic fervour. For no other purpose does a school exist than to lead all who come under its influence to transfer voluntarily the control of their lives to Jesus Christ as a personal Redeemer and Lord, and then to train them in the grace of Christian character.

The following might well be made the creed of every Sunday-school teacher: "There is but one thing needful—to possess God. There is but one theme of vital and exhaustless interest—our relation to God and His world. There is but one idea surcharged with power sufficient to transform men—the Gospel of the Son of God. There is but one endeavour among the activities of earth for the follower of Jesus Christ—the seeking and the saving of the lost. There is but one medium available for all in the realization of this endeavour—the consecration of common conversation. There is, therefore, but one end in man's education that will stand the test and merit the reward in that day of judgment when every idle word will be weighed—the culture of conversation and the consecration of conversation to the ministry of the Gospel of Christ."<sup>1</sup>

The twofold mission of the teacher in the Sunday-school is, first, causing the child to know the teachings of the Bible; and second, upon the basis

<sup>1</sup> Weaver: "The Christian Conversationalist," p. 111.

of these teachings, to create in the child such appreciations of Jesus Christ that sooner or later he will make Him Lord of his life. The Gospel in its simplest form is an idea in process of communication, and the function of the teacher is, on the one hand, to communicate the Gospel, and on the other to secure its full acceptance. Harnack, discussing the principle which unites all Protestant bodies, says that Protestantism reckons upon "the Gospel as something so simple, so divine, and, therefore, so truly human, as to be most certain of being understood when it is left entirely free, and also as to produce essentially the same experiences and convictions in individual souls."<sup>1</sup> The faith of the evangelical Sunday-school teacher extends far and includes much : 1. There is the faith in the Gospel message around which all Biblical instruction centres ; 2. There is the faith in God, the Author of the message, as the One who is working in the heart of the child ; 3. There is the faith in the message, simply telling "the old, old story" with the expectation that it shall produce the greatest transformation in life, and then finally and not least is faith in the child that he, understanding the message, will respond to its appeal. The goal of every endeavour which the teacher puts forth is realized when the child makes that response and voluntarily transfers to Jesus Christ the control of his life.

Education, it matters not what the study presented, requires that the matter shall be adapted to

<sup>1</sup> Harnack : "What is Christianity?" p. 275.

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the mental development of the child. In the earliest stages, lessons in which there is given an opportunity for action and imitation are highly desirable. In the Beginners' Department and the Primary Department, we must present more and more religious truths in forms of imitable action, stories and symbols. As memory develops, catechetical methods accompanied by the memorizing of Scripture should be emphasized. In the play period, when the imagination of the child is most active, the miracles of the Bible and heroic Bible characters make deep impressions. With the full awakening of the social consciousness, the class should be organized and meetings, other than those for instruction, should be held. The gang spirit is an inherent characteristic of the growing life. The child is entering upon the marvellous adolescent stage of personal unfolding. The crisis, when at hand, calls for delicacy and tact, earnestness and faithful pursuit on the part of the teacher. Everything that the child learns becomes a part of his subconscious life. Home influences, the early childhood memories, all that he has been taught in the primary grades, seemingly are buried out of sight, but when the great moment comes, all that he has seen, heard and felt in any way related to Jesus Christ, participate in the soul-struggle, and every act of devotion that he has ever seen, every word of truth regarding the Christian religion that he has ever heard, every verse of Scripture that he has ever memorized, and every great truth that he has

learned in the catechetical process, enter into that marvellous transformation which we call conversion, whether the change comes with volcanic explosiveness or with the softness of the zephyr's breath.

Pastors of evangelical churches recognize that the revival or the protracted meeting does not any longer reach children in large numbers. They are introducing the "revival" into the Sunday-school through a special service called "Decision Day," when all pupils are urged to make confession of faith in Jesus Christ. I do not like the name, for it implies that upon this day decision is to be made. I much prefer "Declaration Day," the day on which children are asked to declare themselves as being on the Lord's side, the presumption being that the faithful teacher, engaged throughout the year in personal work, has brought many of the children ere this to a definite decision, and now they are ready to make their first public profession of faith in Christ. In some Sunday-schools, songs of invitation are sung and all who trust in Jesus as their personal Saviour are urged to come forward and give the preacher their hands. Those who are more afraid of excitement than they are of sin declare that this is a dangerous procedure, and that many children will be led astray, coming forward simply because other children are coming.

Some pastors use a card with four spaces on which the name may be entered as "professing Christian, and church-member," "professing Christian but

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not church-member," "not professing Christian" and "God helping me I choose henceforth to lead a Christian life."

Many children do come, it is granted, who do not clearly understand the step they are taking. It is my custom to form a class of catechumens made up of those who profess faith in Christ on Decision Day. During the period of instruction, I am able to learn just what the experience of the child has been and his personal reason for seeking membership in the church. Those who are not prepared for membership, and who are not able to give any definite experience, are pointed out more clearly the way and urged to continue to seek Christ. Some of the children are considered too young by their parents; these are urged to be obedient and wait until they are older and can secure their parents' consent. The others are received into the church.

Decision Day, combined with catechetical instruction preliminary to church-membership, safeguards both the child and the church. Decision Day should not be publicly announced. The officers and teachers ought to be made acquainted with the fact a month or more beforehand; conferences should be held by the pastor with the teachers regarding the religious attitude of the children in the several classes; personal work should be quietly conducted, and every child who has reached the adolescent period approached, and with such preparation beforehand, Decision Day will be the greatest and happiest day of all the year.

## THE CHURCH

The third factor in the religious development of the child is the Church. In olden days, it was the custom for families to attend church and for the children to be seated in the pew between the father and mother ; but leaving out those churches which we know as "family churches," the custom has almost disappeared. The child goes home from Sunday-school ; his parents and older brothers and sisters, if there be any, attend church. The worship lacks the hosannas of little children, and the service through would indicate that only adults dwell on earth, for no place is given to children. Of course, the Church sustains the relation to the child through the Sunday-school and the home, but these have become institutions quite distinct from the Church. Some pastors have introduced a children's service with a brief sermon for them, but the custom has not prevailed widely ; some have inaugurated the children's choir, while other pastors, by a profusion of stories, endeavour to make the service attractive to children.

Some months ago, Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, writing in the *British Weekly*, commenting upon the fact that children were not attending public worship, suggested the organization of "The League of Worshipping Children." This I have done in my own church. Some weeks after I had taken a class of young converts through a catechetical course, I asked them what they wanted to do for the church of which they were soon to be members : some said

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that they would take envelopes and contribute every Sunday : others said that they would try to get more scholars in the Sunday-school, but one little boy announced his intention of coming to the morning service and trying to get others to come too. His suggestion was enthusiastically received, and then and there "The League of Worshipping Children" was organized, the one requirement of which is that every member attending Sunday-school shall remain for the morning service. Each member wears a pin ; proctors are appointed who report absentees ; when a member of the League is absent four Sundays without good excuse, the gold pin, which is the insignia of the order, is taken from him. The members of the League enter heartily into the service of worship due in no small degree to the fact that they are there voluntarily and not because they are "made to stay to church."

We must introduce more and more the features of the public service in which children can participate ; the repetition of the Lord's Prayer ; the responsive readings of the Psalms and the singing of hymns which the children can readily learn. The sooner we can make children feel that they are expected to participate in public worship, and that they are to learn, by listening to the sermon, truths which will be of helpfulness to them, the better it will be for the church and for the child.

The pastor should arrange his work so as to give the children of his congregation something to do. Aside from its advertising value, the scattering of

cards by the boys of the church does much good, since it makes the boys feel that they are doing something specific for the church. One night I met a little nine-year-old fellow, whom I recognized as attending the church of a brother pastor, a pastor who was having some trouble with a volunteer choir. I said to the little fellow at my side, "Jimmy, how are you getting on over at your church?" "Oh," he said, "me and Mr. Brown are having a lot of trouble with that choir." The next time I saw Mr. Brown, I asked him what position Jimmy held in the church, and he said that Jimmy pumped the organ and greatly magnified his office.

The habit of church attendance formed by children in the adolescent period, continued by them until they reach young manhood and young womanhood, guarantees that they will be members of the congregation during the maturer years of life. If children are in the congregation and are unconverted, the minister can make his evangelistical appeal, knowing that receptive minds are waiting to hear his words. A fresh urgent note is added to his appeal, and the message, which possesses new power because of the presence of the children, will strike the hearts of the elders with greater earnestness and forcefulness.

The liturgical churches, all of whom practice infant baptism, and most of whom hold that baptism is necessary to salvation, bring children into the church after the period of catechetical instruction

and receive them into the full membership by the rite of confirmation.

"The virtues of the method," says a leading Lutheran writer, "are (1) Its systematic leading up to decision ; (2) Its use of social suggestion to secure decision ; (3) Its lack of hard conditions. It is clear that to realize these virtues in the highest degree, catechetical instruction should be a part of the Sunday-school's work. The confirmation class should be, indeed, elective, but a part of the Sunday-school organization in the intermediate department, so that the pupils may feel it to be but natural to enter it. It should be taught by the pastor, and pupils should be allowed to substitute its work for the usual lessons. Unbaptized children should, of course, be given the same opportunity to receive catechetical instructions and to enter the confirmation class as those who have been baptized." <sup>1</sup>

Where the catechism is taught and with impressive ceremonies the child is confirmed, without doubt in many instances the Spirit of God seizes upon the instruction which has been given and a genuine work of grace is performed ; but this work of grace is not made the condition of confirmation. Indeed, the whole tendency of the confirmation class instruction lies in the direction of giving an intellectual assent to certain theological propositions and the act of the soul in which all the powers of personality are voluntarily, completely and for all coming time, devoted to the service of Jesus Christ ;

<sup>1</sup> Weigle : "The Pupil and the Teacher," p. 204.

the act, which from the human side is essential to conversion, does not occur.

Protestant bodies are agreed that the child should be taught the Bible, the doctrines of the church, and should become its communicant member, but the reason the evangelistic fervour has waned in thousands of our pulpits and our Sunday-schools is traceable to the fact that to-day increasing confusion exists as to the meaning of conversion, the necessity of conversion and the method by which conversion is brought about. There is but one Gospel; there is but one way to be saved. Though an angel from heaven were to preach any other, let him be anathema. Children come into the Kingdom by the same requirements which their elders meet. There is none other name and there is none other way. This issue cannot be avoided, for it involves the very existence of all evangelical faith.

Some are opposed to conversion because they believe in baptismal regeneration—an inheritance from heathenism, the history of which and the arguments for its rejection have been given in a preceding lecture. Others are opposed to conversion because they believe in “salvation through education.” There are two interpretations of Christianity struggling for supremacy among evangelicals: “The one,” says Dr. Forsyth, “emphasizing a divine redemption, the other human goodness and its substantial sufficiency.” The face of one movement is towards the Bible and the full acceptance of

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its requirements; the face of the other is towards civilization and culture. One lays stress upon the sense of guilt and the action of grace; the other lays stress upon native goodness and the intrinsic divinity of human nature. Those who proclaim the divinity of man and teach that men should believe like Christ, not in Christ; who make Him an elder brother but not our Lord and Saviour; who preach a gospel of culture but not a gospel of redemption, who make the spiritual awakening an evolution but not a regeneration; these very naturally affirm conversion to be an abnormal experience and their sensitive religious dilettanteism is shocked by the struggle of a great soul seeking reconciliation with God. Emphasizing the time element in spiritual development and scorning the emotionalism in revivals as the hysterical outbursts of neurotic minds, they deny the necessity of conversion because they hold the unscientific conception that growth is always gradual and that in the life-process there are no crises—a view which even a tyro in science would not undertake to defend.

Others still limit the conversion experience to adults and insist that “scientific instruction” in Christian truth is all that is needed to fit children for church-membership. The continuance of the evangelical method, says an exponent of this view, “under present conditions, is losing to the Protestant Church two-thirds of its children, and presents the most alarming and discouraging views of Christianity in the world. The greatest discouragement

that we face is not in China with its unknown number of millions to be evangelized, indoctrinated and converted ; but rather the fact that here in America from our Christian homes and Sunday-schools sixty per cent. of our children never become Christians.”<sup>1</sup> It might with equal truth be claimed that the reason sixty per cent. of those who attend our Sunday-schools do not become Christians is due to the discontinuance of the evangelical method. In point of fact the truth lies midway between the two statements.

Theoretically, all evangelical church-members connected with Sunday-school work, pastors, officers and teachers, are seeking the conversion of children, but practically their attitude is : “ We do not object to seeing these children converted.” The present lamentable condition grows out of a feeble faith in the necessity of conversion and a pronounced unwillingness to participate in intercessory prayer for the salvation of children and in personal work for their conversion. The conditions which exist grow out of the lack of deep, overmastering convictions regarding the nature and the needs of the child. Here is unbarred the real weakness of modern evangelical Christianity. Our confusion and lack of conviction is nothing short of criminal. To dally or to doubt makes for religious inefficiency and furnishes to little children the leadership of the blind.

<sup>1</sup> Wright : “ The Moral Condition and Development of the Child,” p. 156.

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### THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

The last factor to be discussed is the Christian community. The social environment of the child ; the character of the people who live in the neighbourhood ; the children with whom he plays ; the gang with which the boy daily runs and the set to which the girl belongs, play a far more important part in the moral and religious development of the child than hitherto has been recognized. The crowded condition of our cities, the ease with which children traverse sections where sin flaunts itself triumphant ; the blasphemy that falls from brutal lips heard above the roar of the busy streets ; the obscene stories that boys and girls so readily circulate, make more perilous the rearing of the child than ever has been since the Christian faith was established in America.

We cannot hope to change existing social conditions, improving the environment of our children and keeping them under distinctive religious influences so long as Protestant parents, and I include mothers with the fathers, are so unpardonably indifferent to the moral and religious welfare of their children. When the parents of the land, fearful because of the moral dangers that threaten the little child, say, "The saloon must go," the saloon will go. When these same parents say childhood must be saved from physical blindness and loathsome diseases, the cancerous immorality of the city slums will be cut out by the knife of avenging law. The ideal of the ancient prophets was a city with chil-

dren playing in the streets ; and the ideal of the twentieth century prophet is a city with children at play in the city's public playgrounds, and within the bounds of the city, no diabolical institutions growing opulent upon the dividends of sin to threaten and to blast the beautiful young lives who make the most valuable assets of the city.

In the religious education of the child appear these four factors : the Home, the Sunday-school, the Church and the Christian Community. When godly parents show piety at home, when consecrated teachers seek to lead little children to Jesus and to awaken in their hearts the desire to follow Him, when the Christian Churches welcome little children and seek their participation in the public services, when Christian communities furnish the child the social environment that protects him from evil and impresses him for good, making it as difficult as possible for the child to do wrong, and as easy as possible for him to do right,—when these conditions exist, the little child receives his rights and no more than his rights. Blessed are they who participate in the securing of these rights, for they are putting out of the way those things that would cause little children to stumble. And upon them rests the beatitude of Jesus, the Heavenly Champion of Childhood.

## VIII

### THE RELIGIOUS NATURE OF THE CHILD

#### THE SCIENTIFIC INTERPRETATION

“**A** MAN is what he is at any period of life, first, by virtue of the original qualities which he has received from his ancestors and, secondly, by virtue of the modifications which have been effected in his original nature by the influence of education and of the conditions of life.”<sup>1</sup> Science recognizes in all development the presence of two factors, heredity and environment. Scientists, however, are divided upon the question of the transmission of the acquired characteristics ; so that among them as well as among the theologians there is wide divergence as to the theories which account for the presence of evil in the world. Weismann insists that “nothing can arise in an organism unless the predisposition to it is preëxistent ; for every acquired characteristic is simply a reaction of the organism upon a certain stimulus.”

#### HEREDITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Heredity and environment are so interwoven that the results in development are to be attributed to neither one nor the other but to their interac-

<sup>1</sup> Mandsley : “Pathology of Mind,” p. 87.

tion—a fact which makes the organism itself the determinant of the direction which the development takes. Heredity furnishes the latent powers, “the bundle of possibilities”; environment provides the incentives and the means of organic development while the growing organism itself is the product of the interaction of both heredity and environment. “A green frog,” says Headley, “if he is not among green leaves but amid dull, colourless surroundings, ceases to be bright green and becomes a sombre gray. Put him among foliage again and his green soon returns. It cannot be said that the green foliage has caused his colour to change. It is more correct to say that he has the power of changing his colour to suit his environment. If the frog happens to be blind, no change of colour takes place; so that it is by the help of the eye and the nervous system that the change is effected.”<sup>1</sup> The ability to react to the changed environment is traceable to inherited powers which in the beginning were latent but through reaction to stimulus developed, while the change itself from green to gray was occasioned though not caused by the changed environment.

Heredity furnishes the possibilities, environment the opportunities, while growth, the concomitant of struggle, is due to the interaction of the two. Every child is born speechless, but with the possibility of developing a speech centre and the art

<sup>1</sup>Headley: “The Problems of Evolution,” p. 49.

of speaking; the language, it may be English, Russian or Chinese, depends upon his environment. Every child is born without moral knowledge, and therefore without the ability to commit an actual sin; but the possibility is there. "The world," including all that goes to make the social environment of the child, is as truly a product and therefore an inheritance of the past as the physical structure with which the child is born; and this social environment with its evil as well as good institutions is surcharged with sinful suggestiveness. The child bears in his own body the effects of racial and parental wrong-doing and inevitably he comes into living touch with environmental evil embodied in men, institutions and the existing social order.

The child is dependent upon environment for the development of his latent powers since these, except for environmental stimuli, would remain mere potentialities and nothing more; yet environment has no power of contributing to the growth of the child except as the child reacts. A child, whose latent moral powers are weakened because his family record shows that throughout unnumbered generations the line has produced sinners and sinners only, with the development of these powers, reacting upon a social environment made up solely of sinners, can only by a miracle escape becoming also a sinner. The inherited nature is not the cause, but is the source of the possibility of his sinning; the environment is not the cause,

for it furnishes only the occasion for the sinful act. There is no sin without moral knowledge and moral freedom, and the possession of them places upon the will of the child in spite of hereditary tendencies and environmental temptations the responsibility for the sinful act.

The scientist seeking to account for this responsible though weakened will differs from the theologian in defining will and it follows in locating the origin of the weakened moral nature. The will is no longer conceived of as a "faculty" of the mind. The psychologist cannot segregate a man's will and train it; and therefore cannot put upon it any responsibility which does not include the whole of personality, for the will is simply the personality in movement. Any act of the will involves the whole personality. The theologian traces the origin of evil to the free act of Adam in the Garden but the scientist, who holds to the evolutionary theory, approving of the theological method, carries it farther and claims to find the origin of evil in the earliest form of life. "The Darwinian believes that no new power or faculty has been introduced from without since the simplest form of life began the course of evolution that was to end in the most complex and highest."<sup>1</sup> So far science has been unable to furnish convincing proof of the connecting links which unite the species in the ascending scale. The principle can be applied with certitude only to the single species which would result in theology and

<sup>1</sup> Headley : "The Problems of Evolution," p. 291.

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science agreeing that sin had its beginning in the first man.

The development of physical activity is the originating condition of the mental life. The development of mental activity is the originating condition of the moral life, and the development of moral activity is the originating condition of the religious life. In each period of development, the growing personality comes into contact with a new environment, creating new experiences, presenting new problems and calling for new readjustments. In the first period, the child interprets his environment in terms of "thought and things"; in the second, in terms of "thought and persons," in the third, in terms of "thought and God." Among polytheistic races, the interpretations of the religious period are made in terms of "thought and the higher powers."

The physical environment creates the opportunity for the development of the mental life, the characteristic of which is self-consciousness; the social environment creates the opportunity for the development of the moral life, the characteristic of which is duty-consciousness or conscience; the ultimate environment creates the opportunity for the development of the religious life, the characteristic of which is a living consciousness of God. The principle which dominates the whole development is *the quest for inward unity*. Intelligence and morality are stages in the realization of the highest life—life in fellowship with God. The religious ex-

perience resulting in a life of communion with God is the goal of all psychical development.

The genesis of the life of fellowship with God is, according to all evangelical Christians, repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ producing conversion. The result of conversion is the forgiveness of sins and peace and fellowship with God. The forgiveness of sins and the consequent transcendence of the law of cause and effect in the moral realm present an almost insuperable difficulty to the scientific mind. Yet conversion, supplanting wretchedness with happiness, a life of wickedness with a life of holiness, is an experience to which millions testify. Science is not interested in the question whether this change is wrought by the Spirit of God, but is concerned in the process by which the result is attained. This is a proper field for scientific investigation.

The experience of every convert begins with a cleavage in consciousness. This sense of separation from God arises in consciousness when the child realizes his personal freedom and the claims of God upon him, and is due to the child's "failure to cling to God," which is the essential element in the religious definition of sin. With the awakened consciousness of freedom and of God, sin emerges and persists as an attitude of personality so long as self rather than God rules the life. Sin may oppose God through a failure or a refusal to appreciate Jesus Christ who declares the grace of God, and this is unbelief; through a failure or a refusal to rever-

ence Jesus Christ who manifests the love of God, and this is pride ; or through a failure or a refusal to obey Jesus Christ who reveals the will of God, and this is lawlessness. These aspects of sin usually lie outside of the field of consciousness in the realm of the subconscious, but their absence from thought does not deny their presence and power. Sin varies in its intensity from the failure to be rightly related to God to enmity and rebellion against God. Appreciation of God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ, reverence for Him as the One who has the right to the mastery of the soul and the voluntary transfer of the control of one's life to the will of Jesus Christ, enter into the act of personal faith. In this moment reconciliation is realized and the cleavage in consciousness is overcome by the attainment of union with God. These facts, expressed in terms of Christian experience, science admits. Through conversion new powers are released, new enriching and uplifting relationships are formed and new motives and enthusiasms strengthen the will in the endeavour to live a godlike life. Science verifies the claim that conversion is the initiative act which makes for the highest order of saintliness.

#### SCIENCE UPON THE NECESSITY OF CONVERSION

G. Stanley Hall, whose definition of conversion embraces a larger range of experience than would be included in the distinctly evangelical conversion, says : " Indeed the chief fact of genetic psychology is conversion, a real and momentous change of un-

surpassed scientific and practical importance and interest. . . . Every life is stunted that has not experienced this metamorphosis in some form. If the Church allows it to fossilize, psychology, when it becomes truly biological, will preach it.”<sup>1</sup> At a time when the revival movement in many evangelical churches has reached low tide ; because the drawing power of Christianity, inspired by the realization of the necessity of the conversion of young and old and expressed in intercessory prayer and personal appeal to the unsaved has waned, these words of the foremost child psychologist which the age has produced ring like a challenge. They echo the words of Jesus, “ Ye must be born again.”

#### THE THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

“ St. Paul was the first to build up a great theory of salvation. Before him salvation had been a matter of experience. No one had described it.” As a scientist he investigated, analyzed and interpreted the Christian experience ; as a philosopher and theologian he constructed a theory of redemption which, centring in the cross, made the crucifixion the focal point of the world’s history ; as an interpreter of the meanings of the mysteries of human experience, he, on the one hand, portrayed, with almost terrifying vividness, the conflict of the flesh and the spirit, the awfulness of sin, “ the body of death ” and the wild cry of the soul for deliverance, and he, on the other, exultantly described the

<sup>1</sup> Hall : “ Adolescence,” p. 357.

unifying of the sundered self and the enjoyment of an everlasting salvation here and now based upon a reconciliation with God through faith in Jesus Christ. By this presentation, Paul delivered Christianity from Judaism, abolished the religion of the law, created an appreciation of and a demand for the Gospel throughout the Gentile world and set forth the sundering power of sin and made manifest the way by which the consequent cleavage in the moral consciousness could be wholly overcome. His presentation of the needs of man and of the Gospel as the divine purpose and plan in meeting these needs exerted an immeasurable influence upon the whole course of Christian history. Indeed "the Pauline reactions describe the critical epochs of theology and of the Church."<sup>1</sup> Irenæus and the Alexandrians, Augustine, the Reformers and Jonathan Edwards wrought for the betterment of Christianity only as they stood forth as interpreters of Paul.

### PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF MAN

The leading ideas of Paul upon the doctrine of salvation gather about three statements: 1. Man is a sinner; 2. Jesus Christ is able to save from sin; 3. All who believe in Him are saved now and forever, and this salvation rests upon the unmerited grace of God. In contrast with modern teachers who make man an avatar of the Almighty, Paul took a radically pessimistic view. Not only did he

<sup>1</sup> Bigg: "The Christian Platonists of Alexandria," p. 53.

declare sin to be universal but he also affirmed its necessity. The doom of death which is universal comes from sin; therefore sin must be universal. Since the sin of Adam, the natural father of all mankind, death has descended with the generations like an inherited disease. All men freely and voluntarily have sinned and so merit the punishment of sin—physical death. “Sin since Adam has acquired a sovereign power over the human race. There is a kingdom of sin and that is humanity itself. We all, Jews and Gentiles, are under sin. There is a law of sin in our members to which we are subject. Hereby St. Paul declares the necessity of sin for all men and not merely its actual universality.” Sin is cosmic, racial and individualistic. “Sin entered into the cosmos.”<sup>1</sup> “We all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”<sup>2</sup> “Death passed unto all men for that all sinned—for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law.”<sup>3</sup> The kernel, the life-centre of Paul’s Christian feeling and doctrine, is “God’s grace in Christ towards the guilt-laden sinner.”

Paul’s conversion produced a psychological transformation so great that he seemed to become another personality. So thoroughly did he re-think himself through that it is well-nigh impossible to discover the ideas which he held before his conversion. As a typical Pharisee of marked energy and

<sup>1</sup> Romans v. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. ii. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Romans v. 13.

ability, he illustrated "the religion of healthy-mindedness," and was vainglorious, untroubled by conscience and quite contented with himself. The discovery of himself as a sinner entered into his conversion experience and the long years of faithful, heroic Christian service only deepened the consciousness of his own sinfulness. Paul was a missionary theologian. Knowing himself to be saved through faith in Jesus Christ, he knew himself also to be a sinner as he had never known before his conversion. The cleavage in Paul's consciousness was deep and terrifying; yet whenever he looked down into it, he lifted his voice in gratitude: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord"; for he never saw his own sinfulness except he also saw God's more abounding grace. He sought to share his experience with all men, Jews and Gentiles. Paul realized that the capacity for appreciating the grace of God was measured by the individual's consciousness of sin. Therefore, he seeks to establish the fact of sin; and since his ministry for the most part is addressed to Greeks and those influenced by the Greek spirit, whose ethical standards were notoriously low, Paul, more than any other New Testament writer, devotes himself to an analysis of sin and an interpretation of the nature of man. This effort, though basal, is not given the prominence of the two other statements: "Jesus Christ is able to save from sin" and "All who believe in Him are saved now and forever, and this salvation rests upon the unmerited grace of God."

The history of sin, according to the Scriptures, began with Eden, and while little or nothing is said in the Old Testament regarding the Fall, the universal sinfulness of the nation and of the individuals composing the nation is everywhere assumed. Apparently the formulation of the doctrine of original sin, and the attributing physical death and the universality of sin to the fall of Adam, appears first in the Apocrypha. The Rabbinical literature contains many conjectures regarding the sin of Adam, and the supposed consequences of his act included a loss of brightness in the heavenly bodies, the changing of the course of the planets, all living creatures were sentenced to death, the brutes no longer showed respect or gave obedience to man, while everything was thoroughly perverted until Messiah should come.

Paul introduces his teaching regarding the origin of sin in order to interpret the Christian experience, his own and others, and to establish upon incontrovertible grounds the universal need of the Gospel. Jews have disobeyed a revealed Law ; Gentiles have broken the law of conscience and to sin against either is to sin against God. The whole race is involved both in actual sin and also in the punishment of Adam. Sin is a power, a dynamic of degeneration which has become a resident force in man, enslaving and paralyzing his will. The revelation of law makes evident man's inability to keep it and thereby reveals his inherent sinfulness. "The strength of sin is the law."<sup>1</sup> Adam and Christ

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 56.

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Paul places in striking contrast ; through the one's disobedience moral disaster and death had come upon the race, but through the other's obedience salvation and eternal life had been secured. All men are by nature the children of wrath, but the Greek word for "nature" may mean only "a mode of feeling and acting which by long habit has become nature."

The extreme views of Augustine, Calvin and Edwards find support in the writings of Paul only when certain obscure passages are interpreted wholly in their favour. Yet no unprejudiced exegete can reach any other conclusions than that Paul teaches: 1. The universality of sin, the genesis of which he finds in the disobedience of Adam; 2. The cleavage in the moral consciousness of every man, the product of the law of spiritual antagonism, the flesh warring against the spirit; 3. The presence of a resident force, acting according to fixed psychological laws which manifests itself upon the attainment of moral consciousness as inability to realize righteousness and as open and active sin; 4. Sin is more than wrong-doing; it has a religious relationship which is its distinguishing character and involves enmity against God and an inability to be obedient unto God.

### PAUL AND THE CHILD

The religious nature of the child is nowhere disclosed in the writings of Paul. The Gospel he preached could make its appeal only to intelligent,

moral minds, and those unable to respond to this appeal he ignored. The conditions under which children live, their relationship to their elders and to authority are used by Paul to illustrate the Christian's relation to God. The exhortations to children seem to indicate believing children; certainly those who realize their moral obligations. The only reference to the ecclesiastical status of the child appears in 1 Cor. vii. 14: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the husband, else were your children unclean; but now they are holy." The question which had arisen in the Corinthian church related to the defilement which some declared to be inevitable where a husband and wife, one of whom was not a believer, continued their marriage relations. There is no reference in Paul's reply to moral purity or to spiritual holiness. "Holy" and "sanctified" are translations of the same word. The state of an unbelieving husband having a believing wife is the same as the children of all believers. There is no ceremonial uncleanness and the husband or wife of the believer and the children of all believers are ceremonially clean and therefore ceremonially holy or sanctified. Nothing is said here regarding the religious status of the children of Christians which does not apply equally to the unbelieving husband or wife of a Christian. All are ceremonially clean. If the passage proves that children of Christian parents enter the Kingdom of Heaven by birth and therefore are

fit subjects for baptism and church-membership, it proves with equal forcefulness that unbelieving husbands and wives have the same rights and enter the Kingdom of Heaven by marriage. Furthermore, Paul places the unbelieving husband or wife on the same level with the children of believers, each sustaining, though ceremonially clean, the same relation to believers, viz., they have not as yet experienced personal faith, the one being unwilling, the other being unable.

#### BAPTISMAL REGENERATION AND ORIGINAL SIN

The influence of heathenism upon the early Christian faith led to the formulation of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. The supposed benefits were sought by parents for their infant children, and as the doctrine of original sin which taught that new-born infants were "destitute of God," "burdened with concupiscence" and dying entered "justly into damnation," gained acceptance, the custom of infant baptism became well-nigh universal. Only traces of the doctrine of original sin appear in the Apostolic Age, while infant baptism is not found at all. Justin Martyr and Theodotus taught that before baptism men were children of necessity and doomed to become sinners. Irenæus and Tertullian believed in original sin but not in total depravity. The doctrine is not found in the writings of Clement of Alexandria or the earlier works of Origen. After Origen's visit to Cæsarea where "he had met with the practice of child baptism" and "had

prevailed on himself to regard it as apostolic, he assumed the existence of a sort of hereditary sin originating with Adam and added it to his idea of the preëxisting Fall.”<sup>1</sup> Clement, who immediately preceded Origen at Alexandria, never alludes to infant baptism, “nor indeed does the custom appear to have been established in his day in the Alexandrian church.” From the time of Origen, the Greek fathers, though they emphasized the freedom of the will and individual responsibility, recognize a race solidarity and unity in Adam which led to a more definite acceptance of the doctrine of original sin. Tertullian, following Irenæus who held that Adam in a certain mystical sense summed up in himself the whole human race, introduced the theory that as the parents’ bodies produced the child’s body, in like manner the parents’ soul produced the child’s soul, and if moral corruption exists in the parents, it would necessarily appear in the child. Though Tertullian’s theory of traducianism failed to gain creedal recognition, his teaching regarding the transmission of a corrupt nature derived from Adam steadily gained acceptance. The practice of infant baptism and the doctrine of original sin acted and reacted upon each other until the chief activity of the church in Christian communities became that of baptizing babies, and Christianity was reduced, at the moment when seemingly her greatest victories were being won, to the level of a cultus and to the degrading position of a worker in spiritual magic.

<sup>1</sup> Harnack : “ History of Dogma,” Vol. II, p. 305. :

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The thoughtful and devout men of the early Christian centuries, believing that in their baptism every sin they had committed before was then and there washed away, looking within their own souls, found sin present and active, and as they looked back to baptism, they believed, as did practically all their contemporaries, that "the grace of God in Christ was exhausted in the gifts received at baptism." The prevailing piety therefore swayed from fear to hope, because "all other grace which was hoped for was beset with uncertainty."<sup>1</sup>

### AUGUSTINIANISM

The age needed a man with the faith and the insight of Paul to interpret anew the Christian experience, and such a man was found in Augustine. "He gave the central place to the living relation of the soul to God; he took religion out of the place of cosmology and the cultus and demonstrated it and cherished, in the deepest life of the soul."<sup>2</sup> The second great epoch in Western Christianity thus was marked by a revival of Paulinism. Like Paul, Augustine "knew that his heart was his worst possession and the living God to be his highest good; he lived in the love of God and he possessed a fascinating power of expressing his observations on the inner life."<sup>3</sup> Whenever he looked into the awful depths of the cleavage in consciousness made by sin, he beheld the abounding grace of

<sup>1</sup> Harnack: "History of Dogma," Vol. V, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

God in the reuniting of the sundered self. It was this vision of himself which led Augustine to formulate his doctrine of human sinfulness, and this was possible only because he had had the vision of God who by grace had created and redeemed him.

Augustine was inclined to give faith its proper place but certain presuppositions made this impossible. These related to the authority of the Catholic Church and the spiritual benefits which the sacraments confer. In his own experience, religion was a personal relationship between the soul and God who alone gives the soul rest and peace; in his theology the authority of the Church determines what the individual must believe while the sacraments are the necessary means of salvation. "The most questionable features of Augustine's doctrine of baptism," says Harnack, "is that he did not get rid of the magical idea but strengthened it by his interest in infant baptism. While he intended that baptism and faith should be connected, infant baptism made a cleavage between them. He deduced the indispensableness of infant baptism from original sin. . . . The main thing is the active presence of the Holy Spirit in the soul; so that from this point of view, baptism is of no real importance for salvation. But Augustine was far from drawing this inference."<sup>1</sup> No other man did more to create the contradiction in Roman Catholic theology which on the one hand produced the Reformation and on the other destroyed the vital aspects of

<sup>1</sup> Harnack : "History of Dogma," Vol. V, pp. 160-161.

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Augustinianism within the Roman Church than Augustine himself. Had he given up infant baptism and had eliminated the magical element altogether in adult baptism, Augustine could have restored in all its pristine beauty and purity the evangelical faith to the world. His failure to interpret the religious nature and the religious needs of child aright introduced into Augustinianism a hopeless contradiction and put off the Reformation a thousand years, and a like failure on the part of the reformers has perpetuated the errors of Augustine down to the present hour.

### PELAGIANISM

Pelagianism is "the religion of healthy-mindedness" expressed in the forms of thought current in the fifth century. Pelagius and Augustine differed primarily because their religious experiences differed; the one was a monk in whose life there is not a trace of an inner struggle, and the other, "a hot-blooded man who had wrestled, while striving for truth, to attain strength and salvation and who had been overpowered by his experience of the living God."<sup>1</sup> The one sought to arouse men to the pursuit of virtue by portraying with glowing eloquence the inherent capacities of man which waited only his exercise of will for their full development; the other saw mankind to be "a mass of sin," every child of Adam incapable of doing any good thing, justly under the condemnation of God and the

<sup>1</sup> Harnack : "History of Dogma," Vol. V, p. 170.

sentence of death, while no one could be saved except by the free grace of God. The Pelagians held that Adam possessed free will and voluntarily sinned and that neither his sin nor his guilt was transmitted ; so that all men are born into the world in the position Adam was before the Fall. Children, therefore, enter this life innocent and without inherited sin, though they "are born into a society in which the customs of evil prevail." They removed, by denying the doctrine of original sin, the theological foundation upon which infant baptism then rested, but they retained the rite on the ground that if children were not baptized they would fail to attain the highest degree of felicity. They affirmed the sinlessness of the new-born infant, his freedom from every trace of original sin, possessing no tendency which might be described as a constitutional bias towards an evil life. The child thus is poised between sin and holiness and the character he forms is wholly the product of his own volitions.

The Pelagians, who perhaps number more to-day than ever before in history, confuse morality with Christian righteousness, and virtuous acts with a reverent attitude towards and a personal faith in God. They do not give a religious definition to sin because they have never recognized the cleavage in consciousness which sin produces. They represent often a high intellectual development accompanied by a defective spiritual insight. Possessing the scientific spirit, they refuse to apply the scientific law which locates in the original parent organism

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as latent or as predisposition all the characteristics which succeeding generations develop. Rightly endowing every moral being with the power of willing, they are blind to the inherited incapacity of that will to actualize all that the moral judgment requires; they too are blind to a universal characteristic of this will which wills to will evil rather than good. Pelagians would interpret our present social life as a mosaic of isolated individuals rather than a common life, which has flowed through the ages and is now incarnated in myriads of individuals, and thereby they deny the solidarity of the race.

Pelagius and all his followers fail in self-knowledge. Since self-knowledge is the first condition of repentance, the Pharisees of the time of Jesus and the Pelagians of to-day who exploit the religion of healthy-mindedness are alike incapable of the Pauline or the Augustinian experience, the initial phase of which is repentance. In the Pelagian consciousness, there is no sense of a divided self, no divine discontent, no seeking after God; so in the Pelagian analysis of child nature there is lacking those predispositions and tendencies which make repentance necessary.

### THE THEOLOGY OF INFANT SALVATION

The teachings regarding the nature of man held by the different Christian bodies of the world are simply variations of Augustinianism and Pelagianism. These modifications appear in the several

theories which are urged as the ground for infant salvation. The contradictory elements in the teachings of Augustine furnish the two theories defended by the Catholic and the Reformed bodies of Christendom; the former holding to his doctrine of baptismal regeneration and the latter to his doctrine of election. While the Greek Catholic Church reveals little trace of the influence of Augustine, this body declares that there is no salvation except through baptism, that infants "are not at all salvable without baptism," and that they "necessarily are cast into eternal punishment." The Roman Church, teaching alike the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, announces the doom of unbaptized infants to be the *limbus infantum*, the outer border of hell. Lutherans and Anglicans endeavour to reconcile the ecclesiastical and the evangelical elements in Augustinianism and assert that baptized infants are saved but express no hope regarding the salvation of the unbaptized.

Calvinists maintain that "elect infants dying in infancy" are saved and the tendency among modern Calvinists lies in the direction of the claim that all infants dying in infancy are elect. Pure Pelagianism founds the salvation of infants upon their inherent sinlessness or their inability to sin. The theories which mediate between Pelagian and Augustinian interpretations are growing in popularity, due to the fact that on the one hand Christian thinkers are compelled to recognize in human nature a resident force making for sinfulness, while

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on the other hand, feeling very kindly towards human nature as they find it, they discover also a resident force which makes for goodness and therefore they deny total depravity in its intensity if they do not deny it altogether. Moral opportunity is made the measure of man's moral obligation.

A number of mediating theories in explanation of infant salvation are offered; these fall naturally into three groups as each emphasizes emotional, volitional or intellectual phases. The first group is composed of those who for sentimental reasons, such as the character of a loving God or the belief that all, infants and adults, are the children of God, declare all infants dying in infancy to be saved; the second, those who see the necessity of volitional action in spiritual development and who hold that infants after death will be given opportunity for moral testing and growth; the third, those who unite the doctrines of the natural headship of Adam and the universality of Christ's atonement and teach that the sacrifice of Christ produces cosmic salvation because of which all infants are in a state of spiritual safety until, reaching the age of accountability, they fall into actual sin.

The modern theologians who teach that "infants are in the Kingdom at birth and need only to be guarded lest they be converted away from the heavenly Kingdom into which they were born" accept some Pelagian or Semi-Pelagian theory though there is by no means agreement as to the one preferred.

### THE SCRIPTURAL INTERPRETATION

The Bible is not a theological text-book. Upon many questions it has not a word to offer. Though there are more than a thousand references to "the word 'child,' its formations, cognates and correlations" yet it is impossible to find a single text which "explicitly and dogmatically tells us what is the fate of infants dying in infancy." The universality of sin is recognized and emphasized throughout the Scriptures and the responsibility of intelligent moral beings everywhere declared, yet there is not a passage which clearly sets forth the nature of the child or defines his responsibility before God. The Bible describes sin in action—a dramatic movement—and excepting "the strong Son of God," every child of the Scriptures with the awakening of latent powers becomes a sinner. In the greatest saints of the Bible is found the keenest consciousness of sin. The primary work of the Holy Spirit is to create in every man as a personal conviction the consciousness of sin. The realization of personal sin and the awakening of the desire for the better life of righteousness are the prerequisites of the Christian experience. The Bible nowhere suggests that there is any other way of salvation.

The requirements for salvation no infant or imbecile can possibly meet. The appeal of the Gospel is limited to intelligent, moral personalities, and little children evidently lie beyond the reach of this appeal. The plan of salvation, simple though it be, presupposes a mental development

unattained until early childhood is past. Jesus breaks forth into sobs as He beholds the unresponsive and rebellious City of Jerusalem; His face grows dark as He tells of the doom of the unfaithful—the outer darkness where there is weeping and wailing; but no such emotion arises as He welcomes into His embrace the little children who were incapable of understanding His message and to whose souls the way of salvation through faith was closed. The disciples are urged to become like little children, else they cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. To receive a little child is to receive Jesus Himself. He who attains to childlike humility attains true greatness. Children merit reverence because “their angels do always behold the face of My Father in heaven.” The Scriptures nowhere reveal any concern for the salvation of infants and the little children whom Jesus blessed surely were not in danger of hell or even the *limbus infantum*.

The salvation of infants cannot be indubitably proved, and though we rejoice in the hope of their future blessedness, our rejoicing is founded on faith. Across this problem of the child's nature and future destiny, God has written “No thoroughfare.” When parents, with a solicitude more pardonable than that of Simon Peter, cry: “And what of our little child who died?” there comes back the answer, “Follow Me.” We must trust our children, who pass from us before they are able to enter the way of salvation which the Gos-

pel declares, to Him who has made possible the salvation of us willful and therefore guilty sinners. He cannot save them in precisely the same way that we are saved, but He is able to provide for them an ample salvation. We are able to say with David: "I shall go to him but he will not return to me;" not when we have hit upon some theological theory which permits us to maintain logically infant salvation, not when we have read into some passage of Scripture that which strict exegesis will not permit, but when in loving trustfulness we commit the little one whom we have loved and lost to the tender care of Him to whom also we commit our own souls. And when there arises before the Christian imagination the picture of Jesus blessing the little children, the yearning of lonely, sorrowing hearts is strangely satisfied, faith knows a farther reach and peace sentinels the thoughts that centre in Jesus Christ.

As perfect love casteth out fear, so perfect knowledge casteth out faith. The mystery which envelops the nature of children makes possible the faith that during the period in which they are incapable of accepting the Gospel they are not beyond the reach of God's love and care. The foundation of our hope rests not upon the condition or the character of little children, but upon our knowledge of Him who while we were yet sinners loved us and gave Himself for us. This beneficent love is not limited by the act of baptism or by an arbitrary election. The little lives who linger

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only long enough to evoke the purest, tenderest parental love we trust to the keeping of God, and we are unafraid.

### SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE

Theology describes "states of being"; science and the Bible describe "processes of becoming." Theology deals with interpretations and abstractions; science and the Bible deal with facts and descriptions. Theology philosophizes upon the Christian experience; science and the Bible seek to discover laws and principles. Theology defines the religious nature of the child as in essence identical with the religious nature of man; science and the Bible describe an unfolding of personality in which new powers and new responsibilities appear. Deductive logic is the characteristic method by which conclusions are reached in the various systems of theology; inductive logic is the method now dominant in the field of science and in the interpretation of the Scriptures. For these reasons there is a *rapprochement* of science and revelation in which theology reluctantly participates. Theology speaks in static, philosophical and judicial terms; science and the Bible use a vocabulary which is dynamic, biological and social.

Science affirms that whatever appears in the development of the organism existed as a latent force or predisposition at the beginning of the species, if not in the earliest and simplest form of

life. The Bible traces the origin of evil to the first parents of the human species. Science unifies the processes of life, describes their totality as a constant progressive change, according to fixed laws, by means of resident forces ; and accounts for the universality of sin by the recognition of evil as a resident force in human life. The solidarity of the race underlies the principles of heredity. The dramatic portrayal given by Paul of the inner conflict is a scientific description of the dynamic of degeneration operating in an individual life. Science indicates that the development of the child is the result of the interaction of heredity and environment, and places, as the Bible does, a greater emphasis upon the injurious effects which grow out of a sinful environment than theology hitherto has done.

Science and the Bible agree that there is a period in the early life of the child when the knowledge of good and evil is unknown.<sup>1</sup> The will, the agent in sinning, is considered no longer as a faculty but the movement of the whole personality so that the sinful act is proof of sinfulness. The Biblical and scientific descriptions herein accord. The Bible calls all men everywhere to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, the essential factors in conversion. Science studies the phenomena of conversion and finds the laws underlying that process to be in perfect harmony with the psychic laws operative in other epochal readjustments which the personality

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Is. vii. 16.

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makes ; and most important of all, science confirms the Bible in making conversion life's crowning experience, vitally necessary to the child's fullest self-realization, "for every life is stunted that does not experience this metamorphosis."

### AUTHORITY AND THE CHILD

Believing that all life is vitiated by the presence of the dynamic of degeneration, and that little children are destined with the attainment of moral freedom to become voluntarily sinners, how shall we interpret our mission and how shall we minister to childhood ? Holding consistently that all forms are valueless except as they portray the experiences of the soul, we refuse to impose upon the child any ecclesiastical restraint, any obligation to become one of us. We interpret the words of Jesus, "Let the little children come unto Me and forbid them not," to mean "Let everything be removed from the pathway of the child that may hinder him, and let every influence be brought to bear upon him that will awaken in his heart the desire to come to Jesus ; let all knowledge be given that will call forth a personal appreciation of Jesus, but above all else let there be no ecclesiastical enslavement to thwart the putting forth of the faith of a free personality and the voluntary transfer of the control of the soul to God."

"Authority," to use the words of Auguste Sabatier, "is the right of the species over the in-

dividual.”<sup>1</sup> The authority of the family, the authority of the school, the authority of the Church, the authority of the state and of society as a whole, “are conservative and educating potencies without which the progress of civilization and moral culture were not even conceivable.” Authority then has its roots in the organic conditions of the life of the species, and the fruit of authority is the freedom of the individual. Authority is the schoolmaster whose mission is fulfilled in the child’s attainment of freedom. This essentially pedagogical mission at once justifies and limits it. “Like every good teacher, authority should labour to render itself useless.” The progress of the race depends upon its ability to produce individuals of superior worth, who, by their endeavours, their teaching, their influence, will raise humanity to higher levels.

The function of authority, as related to the individual, is to produce autonomy, and the only authority which has the right to continued control is one capable of fuller definition, of greater extension and more compelling restraint, by the suffrages of autonomous individuals. An authority, like the Roman Church, is the embodiment of a past grown rigid and despotic, and the goal of its endeavour is a reproduction of an endless number of individuals in faith and morals, the replicas of the Roman Pontiff. Such an authority devastates the forests of the strong, striking human individuals and leaves

<sup>1</sup> “Religions of Authority,” p. xviii.

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the plains of life hot and bare, on which the rains of inspiration no longer fall, and the unfed stream of human progress dwindles and disappears in stagnant desert pools of evaporating mediocrity.

True authority is the pedagogue, leading the growing child to the door of freedom. The education of mankind is the passage from submission unto authority to the attainment of personal conviction, which often may represent a higher intellectual or ethical level than the authority from which it sprang. The Roman Catholic, and with him all sacramentalists are in part if not complete agreement, claims the right to control the religious life of the individual from infancy to old age, and he declares that the growing mind of the child must accept without question and hold without compromise all that the Church and the Holy Father teach. The institution has supreme sway over the individual, and the individual is of value only as an integer, preserving and strengthening the institution.

The institution has no right to exist save as a means to an end—the end being the perfecting of the individual. The institutions of authority exist for the purpose of developing the expanding mind into a congerie of powers, holding the truth in the form of personal conviction, freely choosing and doing the right in loyalty to God, voluntarily cultivating the consciousness of Jesus Christ, and above all, loving God and fellow man with all the powers of an enfranchised personality.

Herein does our world-wide and age-long mission appear. Not only do we know for ourselves the competency of our souls under God, but we are resolved that no child coming into the world shall be denied the knowledge of the competency of his own soul and the free exercise of his God-given rights. Our fathers struck off the shackles of religious tyranny from the souls of manhood. It is our mission to strike off the shackles from the souls of childhood. Every child coming into the world has the right to the opportunity of realizing personal autonomy. Therefore we repudiate the reception of any one, child or adult, into the Church upon any other basis than the personal choice of Jesus Christ as Lord, an act freely made, in which the control of one's life is voluntarily transferred to God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ.

We do not seek to make the child one like us in form, doctrine or name, but we seek to implant in him such an appreciation of Jesus Christ that his life will be one long, glad, increasing endeavour to grow more and more into the likeness of his Lord. At the very moment when we are insisting that to the child shall be guaranteed spiritual freedom, we also insist that all we have learned from the Scriptures and Christian experience to be true shall be through religious instruction given to the child, in the belief that the truth we have learned in experience, he will learn in his experience also to be truth. For in religion there is but one supreme and

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final authority, and that is the truth which each learns to be truth through experience.

Here appears the true meaning of the right of private interpretation of Scripture. It is said that we oscillate from the authority of the Scripture to the right of private interpretation. What we really insist upon is that the complete control of a man's thought from without is an invasion of the God-given right of the human personality, even though the instrument of control be none other than the Word of God. The message may be so clear that the wayfaring will understand, still it is an invasion of the right of the human personality to give his personal assent to the truth, to demand that he shall accept it without deliberation. Therefore, the man has the privilege of considering, of judging its meaning and binding quality, though all others, Christians, non-Christians and angels in heaven, are agreed as to its truthfulness. Therefore when a religious institution lays its hand upon the little child and claims the right to control the thoughts and decisions of that child, we cry "Hands off, stand back, give the child room. Through every means of communication, enable him to see Jesus. Tell him your own experience, but leave him free to give his own personal assent to Jesus and to transfer voluntarily the control of his life to Jesus as his Living Lord." We champion, therefore, in behalf of the child, the sacred rights of the individual, as opposed to the authority of the institution, and we do this because we conceive it to be God's plan :

“ To create man and then leave him,  
Able, His own word saith, to grieve Him ;  
But able to glorify Him too,  
As a mere machine could never do  
That prayed or praised all unaware  
Of its fitness for aught but praise or prayer  
Made perfect as a thing of course.

“ God, whose pleasure brought  
Man into being, stands away,  
As it were, a hand-breadth off, to give  
Room for the newly-made to live,  
And look at him from a place apart  
And use his gifts of brain and heart.”

A few months ago the governor of one of our leading Southern states was inaugurated. When the impressive ceremony was over, there gathered about his aged mother the men who had aided in elevating him to that high office. To the question, “ Isn’t this the happiest day of your life ? ” she answered : “ I was just as happy when my boy joined the church.”

In this series of lectures, the purpose has been to establish upon scientific grounds conversion and its correlatives as necessary factors in the religious development of the child. The crucial character of this issue has been urged again and again. But when all is said, the successful establishment of this proposition cannot be more than an academic achievement. Theology is an intellectual discipline and is limited, as the intellect is, to the observation and statement of relations. Truth is mighty yet impotent save as it incarnates itself in living per-

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sonalities. The dynamic in the religious development of the child is not an accurate analysis of his nature or a comprehensive setting forth of his needs. That dynamic, so far as human agencies enter, is found in the passionate yearning of those to whom little children are entrusted, parents and teachers who pray for them, who teach them and who wait with eager solicitude for the moment when the child, attaining moral freedom, puts his trust in Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour.

Christian fathers and mothers who look with greater eagerness and joy to the moment when their children give their hearts to Jesus Christ than they do to their gaining the world's highest honours, are the living dynamic forces in the religious development of the child. When the conviction that conversion is necessary to salvation is united to a parental love which seeks the child's highest good, the happiest day in any mother's life is reached when her child becomes a Christian. Then there is joy in the mother's heart and there is joy in the presence of the angels of God ; for in that child the goal of the whole cosmic process has been reached.

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